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# **VIEWS AND COUNTERVIEWS**

**BY  
D. P. MUKERJI**



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Inscribed  
to  
Professor Radhakamal Mukerjee  
(without permission)  
To whom the author owes much

### **Other books by the author.**

- 1. Personality and the Social Sciences**
- 2. Basic Concepts in Sociology**
- 3. Modern Indian Culture**
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*This volume collects a number of essays and articles written in the last decade or so. The origin of the academic ones is discussion with students in the post-graduate seminars, while others of a more general nature can be traced to certain provocative occasions or remarks by friends and public men. As the problems treated here have a tendency to repeat themselves, the reason for a re-publication of un-dated essays in the form of a book may be due to something more than the itch of authorship. Most of the economic essays have been thus allowed to retain their original form; only the sociological articles have been slightly amended. Six years of War have left their mark upon the mood, and also the style, of some of these pages; and it is as well that students of post-war new India should know how a University teacher would keep in tact whatever intellectual honesty he had under the cover of irony.*

*The connecting link is suggested in the title. Too many views possess our young people; and many more opinions are exchanged in the market. So a teacher of some experience may be pardoned if he occasionally counters them by analysis. Beyond this, little, in the way of lead for example, should be expected from this volume. The author is not a leader; nor does he think that readers who are mostly young men and women are born, or even meant, to be led. A sense of direction is all that we can generate by our joint effort.*

*Gratitude is due to the editors of various learned journals and well-known periodicals in which the contents of this volume first appeared.*

**D. P. MUKERJI.**

*Dussera, Lucknow 1946.*



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## PREFACE

### *A Plea for the Study of Sociology*

Every young man and woman in India must study Sociology, and for the following reasons.

The expansion of Sociology has been phenomenal in the last thirty years. Nearly all branches of knowledge have been influenced by it. The entire group of biological sciences, Physics, Chemistry, even Mathematics, the most abstract of all forms of discipline, not to speak of the humanities with Logic and Philosophy at the apex, have had their social origins, context and implications illumined by Sociology. Two major agencies have worked for it, *viz.* (a) the idea of organic development sponsored by the Evolutionists and supported by the Historical School and its divisions, and (b) the needs of practice demanding an application of scientific knowledge facilitated by rapid advances in technology. It was felt that detailed and precise information about a subject was not sufficient to convey its whole truth unless it could be placed in its milieu, which, in its turn, was the function of three important factors. time, place and tradition. Thus, along with the course in Differential and Integral Calculus, the history of Mathematics



has been considered necessary, with intensive work on Colloids that of Chemistry, with the study of the Quantum and Wave Mechanics that of Physics, and so on. In most Universities the history of economic thought now forms a compulsory paper in Economics. Up-to-date research bodies include historiography in their syllabus of History. The result has been a fuller knowledge. Students are now in a position to know that Newton obeyed some law, as his apple did, in turning his mind to the laws of mechanics, that Einstein's equations are no freak, that Marshall did not spin his theories out of his own head, that Gibbon did not stumble upon Rome in a fit of absent-mindedness. Each significant theory in the study, each considerable body of experiments in the laboratory, is revealed by the history of the relevant science to be conditioned by its own traditions in the first instance and by the social compulsions in the long run. The historical approach has also supplemented the conception of organism which had seeped into the various arts and sciences by the latter half of the nineteenth century. In addition to the idea of development the concept of organism suggests the interdependence of parts and the superordination of the whole. Applied to the movement of knowledge, such ideas have led to a realization of the connections between the sciences and the search for another comprehensive or basic science with its own scope and content. Thus Physics and Chemistry have formed Physical Chemistry, Chemistry and Biology have made for

Bio-chemistry, and so on, till all sciences now appear to cling together tied by some umbilical cord to life. The process has been more patent in the humanities. Under the pressure of such ideas the need for an 'nth' science to synthesise or subsume 'n' sciences like Ethics, Economics and Jurisprudence, has manifested itself in the form of Sociology.

On the other side, the practical needs of people had already determined the method and scope of the Applied Sciences. The results of the laboratory had to be brought home to the people, and in that process the most abstruse scientific researches got their direction. The process was often unconscious and non-moral, because one of the major drives behind the application of science was the profit-motive of those who purchased the patents or otherwise used the conclusions of science. In this century, such exploitation has been conscious. Copyrights of inventions have been bought up and stored by big industrialists, endowments have flowed towards those lines of research which hold out prospects of high yield rather than of social satisfaction and betterment. Still, the grand result of technological advance has been a growing recognition of the intimate relation between Science and social needs. This war has heavily stressed it.

Pesides the above two agencies, viz. the evolutionary outlook of modern thought and the urgencies of Applied Science and Technology, recent political and economic experiences are building up

the prestige of Sociology. Politically, the last thirty years have made a mess of human affairs. To take the glaring instance only; the Treaty of Versailles created a problem of nationality which neither the Mercantilist Europe with all its forces making for the nation-state nor the protectionist continent with its emphasis on national economy to make amends for its late and unequal development had to face. The new problem of nationality arose in the context of territorial adjustment which the victorious Allies made under the cover of racial considerations but really in pursuit of the original principle of Balance of Power (renamed as Collective Security) and the derivative one of keeping Austria-Hungary and Germany away from mischief. Within these newly fixed, artificial political boundaries lived certain peoples who had different political allegiances and economic interests only the other day. They soon began to feel that they were an ethnic group *distinct* from their politically suzerain power which, they did not fail to notice, had also been formed on the basis of race among other bases. Political protest and conflict thus gravitated towards the *racial* question. The absurdity of the racial thesis of the minorities could not be unknown to the politicians, but the lessons of Sociology never got a chance against High Politics. It was only when the Sudeten Germans started the trouble and common men sensed the possibility of another war or were shocked by Hitler's persecution of the Jews that the limitations of

purely political considerations began to appear. But it was too late. It has taken a few million men's lives to bring home to certain sections of the living that an outlook larger than the political is necessary to tackle the 'racial' problem. Laws against the coloured people are still there all over the world. If we spy a ray or two of hope it comes from that larger outlook which the study of Sociology alone can generate.

In India the sociological view is the need of the hour. Those who have followed the Gandhi-Jinnah correspondence without bias know that the talks broke down mainly on the 'two nations' hypothesis. Mr. Jinnah is convinced that the Muslims are a nation on the basis of quantity, legal definition and implications, culture and civilisation, moral code, art, language, customs, outlook, sense of value and proportion, names and nomenclature, aptitudes and ambitions, etc. The last items are not separate ones,—one almost feels that the lengthening of the list is only the politician's rhetorical device,—and they can be easily included within culture. In addition, Mr. Jinnah implies religion which may also be taken as a part of culture in the widest sense of the term. Now, the *political* attitude towards Mr. Jinnah's thesis cannot but raise the question of the wisdom of dividing a territorial unity into smaller sovereign states each exposed to outside dangers and each constituting a danger to the other. And the only *political* answer to the question would be political treaties. But political treaties can

easily be turned into scraps of papers. The minorities in the border-regions may behave like the Sudeten Germans. Obviously, this is no assurance for peace and good-neighbourly relations. *The truth is that political problems cannot be solved politically.*

Can Pure Economics help? Pure Economics means Free Trade. Even a superficial study of the economic map of India reveals the inherent weakness of Pakistan's resources in iron, coal and oil, and in the major commercial crops except jute. Pakistan will be rich in wheat and rice. But these surplus food-crops will have to be sold. Wheat can be sold to the Middle East, but rice (its surplus is doubtful just now) has no outlet except Hindustan. *Wheat regions again have a wicked tendency towards being endemically depressed areas from the point of view of price-structure.* Besides, the more industrialised Hindustan can very easily satisfy a portion of Pakistan's demand for industrial goods so long as Pakistan does not catch up. If Hindustan manufacturers raise prices and secure wheat from a too-willing Australia and the U.S.A., Pakistan will have to consume more wheat—which is absurd—and import similar goods from elsewhere and raise tariff-walls against Hindustan. So Pure Economics will lead to protected Pakistan and protected Hindustan, in fine, to impure, restrictionist Economics which, as Prof. Lionel Robbins, the doyen of Pure Economists, has pointed out, is the chief cause of modern wars.

Salvation does not lie this way.

On the other hand, a sociological analysis of the 'two-nations' claim offers some hope. As it has been discussed elsewhere by the author,\* only a bare outline of the argument can be given here. Sociologically: (1) The growing number of Muslims in the League is significant in so far as it gives confidence and transmutes a vague aspiration into a stable attitude of hope. Quantity after a certain point changes into quality. Whether that point has been reached or not cannot be accurately indicated. The persistence of the demand for Pakistan, however, forms the index to the point. There are other Muslims who do not make the claim, but so long as their opinion is not institutionalised, it does not come within the purview of sociological scrutiny except as a case of wish without influence. (2) Juridically, the Hindus are different from the Muslims. At the same time, both have the feature common to all forms of pre-industrial societies, viz., the emphasis on obligations in preference to rights. But if both Hindustan and Pakistan are on the way of being industrialised, or of being independent, instead of remaining feudal and academically sovereign, insistence on rights becomes a dynamic agency for bringing about similarities in juridical status. In which case, the Muslim assertion of inherent right is to be appreciated. *Jus naturale* divorced from *jus gentium* is hope rationalised into poetic equity; natural right,

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\* Modern Indian Culture.

birthright, inherent right, apart from social obligations, is hope aggressive to make dependence tolerable. The Congress also has believed in inherent right. International law again is not a fixed entity, and its definitions of the nation, e. g. in the status of the national and of married women in matters of naturalisation, are essentially political and temporary. (2) The question of cultural difference is all-important. However sound Mr. Jinnah may be in politics, here he has been badly served by his cultural advisers. Neither in music nor in painting, neither in architecture nor in literature, (and literature is more than language) can the cultural separation be wholly upheld. Muslim Fine Arts and Crafts are *distinctive, but not distinct*. What we have inherited is the glory of Hindu-Muslim-Buddhist-Jain endeavour most ably supported by the achievements of the so-called depressed classes. Of course, according to some sociologists, religion is only one, although an integral, part of culture. But, for the Hindu Hinduism itself is the culture, and for the Muslim, Islam is the same in the sense that it pervades all sections of the Muslim's life. The real difference lies in (a) the finality of the Prophethood, and (b) the Muslim social tolerance. The Hindus have a large pantheon and are tolerant only in creed. These two points mainly account for the 'distinct outlook' of the Muslims mentioned by Mr. Jinnah and noticed by others. Be it noted, however, that Mr. Jinnah uses the word 'distinctive' to denote *distinctness*.

Sociology, however, would not stop at this kind of cross-sectional study. It would unfold the social processes. One process is generated by the secular-scientific spirit which tends to separate the religious traits from the evolving culture-pattern. Probably, the educated Muslim has not yet imbibed that spirit to the extent that the educated Hindu has done; at least, the number of Muslims who have done so is smaller. But the masses are one in their imperviousness. So let us not build too much on the scientific attitude. A more potent agency is the urge of a changing social economy. The crucial question is this—Is Pakistan going to come out of the feudal conditions of living or not? If it is, then a non-feudal Pakistan will have less reasons to culturally differ from Hindustan. Cultural divergences no doubt exist between two capitalist countries like the U.K. and Germany, but the bitterest of fights among them does not stand in the way of the British and the German leaders' common contempt for the Indian peoples, their countrymen's common exploitation of less developed countries, and their bankers meeting at Basle during the war. And exploiting is no sign of cultural unity or understanding. It is not suggested that industrialisation as much is the sociological solution. Industrialisation on the basis of profit and competition simply raises the differences in outlook to another level dropping a few sore points on the way and creating other more vicious ones. Only



when the people's interests are wholly served by socially wise processes of industrialisation that some form of genuine unity in outlook can be achieved. But this unity is not standardised uniformity, it is a *union* of diversities. Sociology points towards the way of *union* away from mechanical or traditional *unity*.

The above argument may be right or wrong. It has been offered just to suggest that a sociological analysis must subsume, pervade and override any political, legal or economic deal or compromise. The Muslims may or may not form a nation, but their demand for nationhood is not merely a political, economic, or legal demand. Similarly, self-determination pre-supposes self-hood; and self-expression, even if it takes the present form of a fully sovereign state, is more than all that. For example, it may as well be an upsurge of Hinduism, of a new religion, of a Muslim renaissance. Self-hood cannot be cabined into a legislative chamber. It may take all manner of shapes, but the urge is of the whole. It is only when we recognise the wholeness of that urge—and Sociology with its synoptic view can alone give that sense of the whole process—that any intelligent policy can be adopted.

I strongly plead for the study of Sociology at this crisis of humanity. Politics, Economics, Jurisprudence have taken man piece-meal, split up the social processes and halted them. 'Pure' Economics is pure propaganda carried in a subtle

way; Jurisprudence is now only an item in the college-syllabus; and Politics is politics. Science divorced from man in society has played into the hands of vested interests. Will our universities now look up? We talk of India's vivisection, but what about the vivisection of knowledge which has been going on these years in the name of learning, scholarship and specialisation? A 'subject' has been cut off from knowledge, knowledge has been excised from life, and life has been amputated from living social conditions. It is really high time for Sociology to come to its own. It may not offer *the* Truth. Truth is the concern of mystics and philosophers. Meanwhile, we may as well be occupied with the discipline which is *most truthful* to the *wholeness* and the dynamics of the objective human reality.

### *Dictatorship.*

Dictatorship as personal or autocratic rule is not a new phenomenon. But certain strong tendencies in the world situation led to its wide prevalence. The strain of the Great War made people, otherwise given to the pursuit of individual happiness or profit, ready for regimentation and centralised authority. When the war was over, it left, among others, the problems of unemployment and periodical crises in production to be solved, but they appeared to be beyond human control. The result was the generation of a mood of frustration and a sense of being victimised, particularly among the adults and the working classes. They felt that none of the values which they had been asked to fight for, and in which some of them honestly believed, were safe in the hands of the existing authorities. But values did not exist apart from institutions; and if new values were to be cherished, the old institutions had to go. Of the older ones, the Parliament had been the forum of public opinion and the instrument of democratic processes. Yet in England, the home of parliamentary democracy, it had become, so they felt, an agency for interests which were out of touch with, if not antagonistic to, the growing ones. With the gradual encroach-

ment of the executive the forum became a pedestal for politicians in power. And they were akin to the owners of the means of production. Elsewhere, as in France, corruption crept in; in Italy and Germany, where parliamentarianism was not rooted in the soil, political life was fragmented by various sectional interests in the absence of a solid middle class. The new countries created by the Versailles Treaty had other problems centring in the question of national construction at double-quick pace and out of heterogeneous elements. They too suffered from the fear of instability in the changing world. Only in Soviet Russia was there a chance for making a positive profit out of the lessons of general insecurity. Even then, Soviet Russia was disorganised internally and threatened externally. The post-War period did not release Soviet Russia from the stern necessity of a desperate remedy which was found in the 'dictatorship' of the Party to get over the critical period. Fear and fragmentation of normal social life elsewhere created a vacuum which was filled by the Dictator.

So, he would have to be a doer and not a talker; a go-getter and not a legal formalist achieving success on files; a man whose word was action and action a satisfaction of immediate urgencies, and above all, a representative man, a hero who would symbolise the common aspirations and feelings. Once these roles could be fitted into a person, he would be a 'charismatic' or a spell-binder, a priest, a prophet and a king all rolled

into one, the leader, the Duce, and the Fuehrer. It was in this way that the identification with the Father could be achieved by the people. The long-lost primal principle of oneness with the super-Ego was at last restored, and human beings could be rid of their responsibilities imposed by the Ego.

Not that it was always necessary that the strong man should be in clear possession of the laws of historical development. Sufficient unto the day 'if the dictator could deliver the goods, if he could mirror the average susceptibilities, if he could impress upon his people that they could not do without him. The goods wanted were self-respect and the removal of fear and guilt, the average demands were economic security, and the common sensibilities were not very cultured ones. When the mental climate is vague and simple, the leadership that it fosters has not the merit of a far-sighted comprehension of the inter-relatedness of events. What is wanted is effectiveness.

Some change had been effected even before the dictators appeared. As older vested interests were not all liquidated, but only discontented though for other reasons, dictators could always find support from them. They too wanted a change in form in order that the content of their motive might have a freer play. The new regime was, therefore, generally financed by the disgruntled among the older groups, and physically supported by the malcontents among the

armed forces. This alliance took place in those countries where the old order persisted and the nature of the world-crisis was not understood. Elsewhere, dictatorship came in the wake of progressive forces, like national sentiment and the emergence of the dispossessed as a new political power.

Meanwhile, two other tendencies had been acting on the sly. First, the latest phase of the capitalistic production had created the black-coated gentry who, with their semi-education and their desire to be lifted up in the social scale, were a new mass of men eager to find in the dictator a symbol of their itch for power and good living. Because they were a new group, the older values had little or no hold over them. Nor could they re-orientate the traditions or build up their substitutes. They formed the public, and by sheer number they moulded opinion which could not, in the nature of things, be informed. It was this anti-intellectual drive that supplied the emotional source of the strength of the dictators. Dictators in the industrialised countries recruited their staff from the financiers and Big Business, their experts and executives from the managerial class, and their rank and file from the petty bourgeoisie. Even the national dictators could not but compromise with the new bourgeoisie, who, in the semi or undeveloped countries, found in national self-sufficiency an opportunity for making profit through expansion. In the former case, dictatorships were an adjunct

to finance-capital, even though the latter was formally transformed in the subsequent stages; in the latter case, they were the auxiliaries of industrial capital competing with foreign capital in the production of consumers' goods.

Dictators could not remain as such unless the means of dictation were readily available. Quick means of transmitting information and emotions and easier facilities of appeal had already been provided by a mechanical civilisation. The machine had further spread the mechanistic point of view and reduced variety into a standardised uniformity of taste catered mainly by the trustified Press. Discrimination, the result of leisure, could not very well survive the onslaught of numbers and the hectic passage of moments. So, when dictators came, they found the ground favourable for dictation by mass suggestion. In fact, the new mass was more than half-willing. The overwhelming sense of economic insecurity and the deliberate application of devices for dictation are the features of modern dictatorship.

With the above background in mind we now analyse the specific aspects of dictatorship with an immediate view to discovering their types, if any, and the ultimate one of facing them with their opposite conception, which is not Democracy but Socialism.

We need not concern ourselves with the legal aspect, because every dictator draws his power from the active or passive consent of the sovereign body, who may be the people or the prince,

Neither the 'commissionary' dictator like Mussolini or Kemal Pasha nor the monarchical dictator has an inherent right to be such, and none can retain permanency against the wishes of the people. Politically, the dictator is an autocrat in so far as his rule is virtually independent of the consent of the governed, though not theoretically without it. The independence is not absolute, being modified by the ruling interests that brought him to power and influenced by party or entourage. But the power is his, though the source of influence resides elsewhere. Technically, dictatorship must have a well developed technique of dictation, positive and negative in scope, the sole object of which is to make dictatorship equated to the people by removing opposition and eliciting consent. The historical aspect depends very much upon the existence of liberal traditions. In a country where liberal 'mores' are developed, the unfamiliarity with autocracy breeds resistance. Here the distinction between liberalism and democracy may be noted. Concessions to the former may be curtailed during an emergency and lead to absolutism, but the democratic habits cannot be dropped. Beneath these aspects runs the thread of autocracy. Such autocracy may be personal or collective and classify the political structure of dictatorship accordingly. The first type works out the principle of leadership to its logical conclusion. From the status of the first among equals, the idea of Fuehrer as the leader because he is the leader has evolved as an excres-



cence. The separation of the status from the political and economic functions invests the Fuehrer with spell-binding powers. He is the shaman-magician of today. Other fuehrers are appointed by the Fuehrer in a descending series. On the other hand, collective dictatorship is usually of the Party, as in Soviet Russia or in China, or of the administration irresponsible to the legislature, as in British India and China again. None of those types have fuehrers, though they have leaders. In the administrative type there is a hierarchy tapering towards the 'chiefs'. The 'Party' is a school of leadership, and in its attempts to equate itself to the people it must needs consider qualities other than those of birth and privilege, *e.g.*, positive achievement and subscription to the basic views of the Party, as the primary qualifications. Obviously, the party structure tends to be democratic and mobile within the limits of loyalty to its guiding principle. The sub-type of administrative dictatorship, though it may be recruited by the rigorous test of competitive examinations, is immobile and sacrifices leadership at the altar of seniority. Usually, it degenerates into an exclusive group or caste with a set attitude towards attempts at opening its ranks. The real difference between the personal and the collective types of dictatorship consists in the greater facilities for information and discussion in the latter and more opportunities for 'graft' in the former. The administrative dictatorship, on these points, is more akin to the personal type, though

graft as such is usually absent. Probably, the code of honour and the high salaries which every administrative caste possesses and enjoys make 'graft' unnecessary. (In China, however, graft appears to be common). Another difference is that while after the death of the Dictator nobody wields the original, personal, magical influence, the collective dictatorship may continue and raise any other person to a similar status.

A few pertinent questions may be raised here. What about the dictatorship of the proletariat and the Communist Party? Is Stalin the Fuehrer of Russia? What is the element of truth in the charge that the Congress Executive is the Indian edition of the Fascist Grand Council and that Mahatma Gandhi is the Duce? To which type of dictatorship does Mr. Jinnah's leadership belong? Is the Muslim League a party-dictatorship at all?

The answer to the first question has been given by M. Lurat, a French anti-Bolshevik Marxist, in his book *Marxism and Democracy*. He has proved that in the Marx-Engels programme and theory the dictatorship of the proletariat played a very minor part. Only in five places in their voluminous writings is there a reference to it. It was Lenin, however, who gave it a significance in view of the then prevalent situation, which was one of chaos and full of chances for the betrayal of the Revolution by men in possession of power after the Czar's fall. M. Lurat concludes that though Marx envisaged a whole epoch of the dictatorship of the proletariat

in the transitional period. he fully comprehended the democratic process in the advent of the new social order and was positively against the Blanquist tendencies towards insurrection by the spontaneous action of the masses. My own reading confirms this view. Lenin with his acute sense of the realities was more concerned with the transition period as it related to the Russian happenings and forged the Party that had to annex 'dictatorial' powers. Later events show that the stringencies of the class dictatorship were not a permanent feature in Lenin's programme, but just an interim war measure. Such 'dictatorship' as it exists today in Soviet Russia is not of the industrial proletariat; nor is it confined to manual workers in cities and villages. When classes have been abolished, what emerges is not the old class, but a new community with its own stratification.

The Communist Party does not and will not tolerate a rival party. It has sternly purged itself. Both these methods are anti-liberal. But they need not be called anti-democratic if we remember that all important decisions are a collegiate decision, that people are very well informed in their discussions, which are surprisingly free, that the Executive are popularly elected for a given term and can be summarily recalled, that the Party as such is not constitutionally recognised, that in the decisions men other than the party-members do generally participate, even though they be under the guidance of the Party that confines its activi-

ties to the issuing of 'general directions'. Above all, the main purpose of the Party is to evoke and formulate a general will among a large population that had neither the background of democratic processes nor the support of liberal traditions. As the Webbs have written: "Thus, if we must interpret the dictatorship of the proletariat as exercised in the U.S.S. R since 1916, we might say that it is not in the constitutional structure, nor in the working of the Soviet and the ubiquitous representative system, that anything like autocracy or dictatorship is to be found, but rather in the activities that the constitution definitely authorises the executive to exercise." Similarly, with regard to the government under the major influence of Stalin, the Webbs' inference is that it has been, as it still is, a government by a whole series of committees. Even in the matter of defence against Germany, Stalin has assumed the powers that were given to him. His rule is not undemocratic, neither personal, nor autocratic. Ann L. Strong has recorded how Stalin, then only a secretary of the Party, functioned. "Through his analysis he is the supreme combiner of many wills." That seems to be the impression of Beaverbrook, Harrison and Cripps. Of course, Stalin is almost worshipped by his people. But personal adulation is an earlier trait of the people so long used to the Little Father as also to the hold of the clergy and the nobility. Thus the Soviet dictatorship, in the execution of its commission, though illiberal, is not un-democ-

matic. It is, therefore, wrong to use this term in the Russian connection, particularly when it is applicable to Hitler or Mussolini's rule. The test of sociological analysis is in the discrimination between the leadership of the Party in the U.S.S.R. on the one hand, and of the dictatorial hold of the Fuehrer or the Duce in Germany or Italy on the other. If, as Hans Kohn has it, the dictatorship of Fascism is charismatic, nationalistic, permanent and based on an immutable inequality between men and men, while that of communism is 'rational, international, temporary and egalitarian,' it is better that some word other than 'dictatorship' be found to describe the Russian phenomenon. That word should connote greater freedom and solicitude for the masses and minorities, meanings which are not conveyed by 'democracy' as it is bandied about today.

The Congress organisation by its co-existence with other organisations, its constitution, its simple demands and wide latitude, the varied class-composition of its membership, and its professed motive and active programme of evoking a general will to freedom, is the opposite of dictatorship. The charge came up when the Congress Government resigned. The fact was that the resignation took place when it was impossible to carry on. When the Congress Executive realised that there were two governments functioning at one and the same time, they issued the order to withdraw in exactly the same democratic spirit as they had passed the general ins-

truction to accept office when they received and believed in the assurance that it would be one administration that would function without let or hindrance. There is no recorded instance of the Congress Executive going beyond the limit of a loosely drawn general line. Provincial party organisations would occasionally exert pressure upon the Government, but in no case was it exercised except to bring popular grievances to the immediate notice of the authorities and to prevent them from allowing official procedure to over-ride the popular urgencies so long held back by feudal and administrative laziness. In all important matters the Government's point of view was accepted by the Party. Nothing beyond temporary annoyance occurred. To what extent the Congress Party has exercised its 'dictatorial' power towards other parties will be apparent in the fact that it has been accused of 'appeasement' towards the minorities.

Gandhiji's part in the Congress decisions has been misinterpreted by his admirers and critics alike. He has been called the Admiral, the General, the Captain, the Leader, the guide, philosopher and friend, without any discrimination. When he has demanded discipline and purging, he has earned bad names. Even his desire to be relieved of the leader's responsibility has been compared to the holding of the revolver at his friends' breasts. The constant use of military terms, *e. g.*, the Dictator, by local organisations has led to the attribution of the qualities of the

Great Dictator to him. *But the essence of his position is that it is based on influence, and not on power.* This influence is mainly ethical and popular. People know him to be a disinterested man, they are aware of his services, and they trust his intelligence which is uncanny enough to be mis-called intuition. His means of communicating influence are poles apart from the methods of 'dictation' adopted by the dictators. Essentially, his influence is that of a 'charismatic' person casting a spell over his immediate followers, and others as well, with this singular difference that his ultimate 'power' is not magical but ratiocinative. People have spoken up to him, and their differences with him have not always led to his triumph. He has recently gone as far as actively canvassing for those who vitally disagree with him in his most cherished convictions about non-violence and Indian unity. That aura which surrounds him has been created by his physical distance, his detachment, his asceticism, his frequent references to God and dependence on divine messages, his humility, saintliness of character and habits. That his absence or retirement is not likely to stop the Congress Party from playing its role throws serious doubt upon the dictatorial nature of his hold. If to-day his position is magical or messianic, tomorrow it will be only ritual. But, sociologically, rituals are democratic.

It is with trepidation that one can write about the Muslim League and its leader. Organisationally, the League has numerous points of simi-

larity with the Congress. The differences arise from two factors: (1) While the Muslim League is an organisation of Muslim interests, it must needs have a basis in the solidarity of a religious body. Indian Muslims think that their religion cannot be divorced from politics and that solidarity is of the greatest value at this hour. (2) The corollary to the above is the stress on conflicts as the agency for securing solidarity. Conflict is primarily with the Congress, and only secondarily with the administration. The first is immediate and contiguous, the second is in the background. This double burden has disabled the Muslim League from being a crystallised body of the entire Muslim community. The urge for completing the arc is implicit in the disciplinary action against recalcitrant Leaguers. The first conflict is re-inforced by a general feeling of denial of the 'natural' rights *qua* Muslims. Occasionally, the sense of frustration has seized upon 'atrocities' stories and nurtured the feeling of victimisation. When the inferiority complex manifests itself in the way it has done, collective behaviour leans towards the rule of a dictator. If there is a fund of religious emotion ready at the disposal of the party, the tendency gathers strength. Against this we note the traditions of social democracy which Islam enjoins. How far they will stand the pressure of power-seeking elements is a moot point. As yet, however, the Muslim League does not correspond to any type of collective dictatorship. In fact, it is not a dictatorship.



The relation of Mr. Jinnah to the Muslim League is intriguing. There is as much or as little caveat to his 'dictation' among his followers as to Gandhiji's in the Congress ranks. But Mr. Jinnah's hold is neither charismatic nor messianic. He has greater proportion of power than influence. The power is mainly derived from the disposition of British Indian politics. But this influence arises from the domestic conflict and his personal abilities. He is the only counter to Gandhiji, his shrewdness and distrust being the greatest, he and he alone can check the latter's insidious moves for the Hindu Ram-Raj. In his absence, others will succumb to the subtle machinations of the Hindu Congress leader. On the other hand, his debating powers, his incorruptibility and his pride are universally accepted. He will not bend, as every Muslim Leaguer knows. May we add, as every Indian knows? And then, he always keeps the necessary distance from his followers, so much so that he is regarded as an aristocrat. His immaculate dress, his grand manner, and his great charm have helped in the formation of this opinion. He cannot be called a deeply religious man, though he does not disdain to regard religion as an important item in his programme for solidarity. His political realism has no parallel in the recent history of India. Perhaps, his compeers are to be found in the pages of Mahratta history. His psychological affinity with the Hindu leaders of the earlier days is strong. It is a subject for fascinating specula-

tion. But the stern fact is that both Gandhiji and Mr. Jinnah draw their puritanic strength from the desire for genuine democracy, and their personal hold from its frustration; that sociologically, their common role is democratic, and that their values are more symbolic than subjective.

I cannot conclude this portion of the essay without attempting to answer another question. If the Congress and the League are not dictatorial organisations, if Gandhiji and Mr. Jinnah are not dictators in the sense accepted so far, how is it that the word 'dictatorship' is always associated with them in common parlance? A partial reason is imitation. But a whole people does not imitate unless it is ready for imitation. The readiness to adopt this word springs from the facts of Indian life. It is revealed by the following analysis. The Indian middle class is not the bourgeoisie of Victorian England. There it was recruited from the trading and the commercial class who made good in their business. The money they had saved could be, and was, invested in industrial enterprises. There an agrarian revolution had preceded the industrial changes and prepared the ground for further changes in the social structure. When the returns from industrial shares were higher than from land, the nobility was not above the temptation of becoming richer. In India, the commercial interests of the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries did not get the chance of a

transformation into industrial interests. On the other hand, they were made land-minded and job-minded. Various land-settlements and educational measures saw to it that the historical development was turned into another channel. How far this irrigation has been responsible for alkaline deposits in other spheres need not be discussed here. But it is safe to presume that a sense of humiliation gnaws at the heart of this spurious class, that specious emotionalism is its natural quality, that it seeks desperate remedies for common ailments, and that its code of conduct, if pushed ahead, can become fascistic. (I would recommend the study of certain traits in Bengal politics and culture to those who doubt the above assertion. Gokhale's statement about the supremacy of Bengal may not be true now; yet Bengal, as a sociological laboratory, still contains exaggerated cross-sections of the Indian life of to-day.) Add to this other traditions like *guru-vad* and *avatar-vad* in religion, and a partial explanation of the common use of the word 'dictator' in India can be found. To complete the explanation, reference may be made to India's familiarity with administrative dictatorship. In these war-years, her knowledge in this regard has become intimate. The previous analysis also throws light on Mr. Jinnah's view that democracy is not suited to India. A frustrated class deprived of the chances to create a democratic order cannot, in the nature of things, be convinced by the advertised opposition of demo-

cracy to dictatorship, nor can it very well see that the real polarisation is between Socialism and Dictatorship. This is not the ineffectiveness of the publicity departments of democratic powers, but just the toughness of the human material that has seen through the insufficiency of mere political democracy to secure social justice and would think more than once before hitching its faith to the tallest talker.

A sociological analysis, therefore, shows that the classification of dictatorship on the political principle of its being contrary to political democracy is not satisfactory. In fact, this is partly admitted by Prof. Kantorowicz in his excellent monograph on the sociology of dictatorship. He mentions social forces as better differentia. By social forces he means the ruling or supporting 'groups', who in the case of the personal dictator may be the 'staff', and in that of collective dictatorship may be themselves dictatorial. On this basis, there are three types: the military, the party, and the administrative dictatorship. The last means the rule of the civil service and the police. "None of these groups," he concludes, "is a class (though each of them may rule dictatorially in the interests of a class)."

But if the sociologist's task is to further analyse "the conditions for the rise, development, and decay of dictatorships", it is hardly proper to ignore, on the score of popularity, their connection with the economic interests of certain classes, if any such connection is historically

sound. Using the word 'force' somewhat loosely, one would think that sociological analysis consists in the study of disposition of the social forces that lead to the particular phenomenon rather than in the record of their rise and fall. When ordinary men and women associate two things, there may be something in it. Even if there is nothing, the sociologist cannot remain aloof from popular errors. In fact, they offer a good starting point. Occasionally, the oversimplification of such popular ideas may turn out to be due to the crudeness of the factors involved or to the commonness of essentiality. It is not at all necessary to be an orthodox Marxist to believe that social forces are also economic, that economic forces also create classes, that classes collect strength from various sources, religion, culture and what not, and that once fully formed the relation between the classes furnishes an important motive for change. Quite certainly, economic relations are not merely a matter of bread; they do posit *rationality*. What dictatorship has done is the replacement of rational values by irrational ones. In this replacement, the idea of the social forces and of the economic man, which is not a mean or ignoble idea, has suffered eclipse. Dictatorship cannot tolerate Economics or the economic man; it welcomes unproductive expenditure on death-deals and advocates the abandonment of 'calculation' before the call of heroic sacrifice. A sociologist of today can hardly hug the hypocrisy of the

nineteenth century in calling the economic motives and processes sordid. Economic motives are rational urges; economic forces are not vulgar or popular drives; class-conflict is also impelled by the desire to live better.

Besides, history should offer a better analysis than typology. Fascism in Italy mobilised the petit bourgeoisie at first; but in its full tide it washed them out and developed a new ideology, *viz.*, the national-imperialistic. Even then, the economic appeal of settlement and higher standards in the empire did not disappear. What dropped out was the early affiliation to Socialism. Mussolini sought to work out through his charm "the immutable, beneficial, and fruitful inequality of mankind" (including economic inequality, of course) in his new empire, but the charm was countered in the land of magic. In Soviet Russia, on the other hand, the Communist\* Party's intimacy with the proletariat was close; even in this war the Party's nationalism is of a different quality: its guerilla warfare is conducted by the people, as the democrats understand it. What is happening is that the Party is now becoming qualitatively equal to the nation. In this process of equivalence, the Party's economic policy has proved correct and built up the morale of the armed forces. The Party's steady and continued alliance with certain economic doctrines and its vigilance over economic interests are also at the back of Soviet resistance today. Each army unit had until recently a political commissar, proving

that the Party leadership had not slackened. It was otherwise in Germany. Hitler first rallied the lower middle class, as Mussolini did. But his ascent was steeper. Though the 'middle class' (not of the English variety) were impoverished by the vagaries of the mark, there still remained more economic groups in Germany than in Italy to win over. The highest among them were exceedingly able and powerful. The army and financial groups, and particularly the civil service and the police, rendered silent service. Hitler leaned, in fact, had to lean, more upon the new friends than upon his old allies. The latter had socialistic leanings and their leaders were purged. As in Italy, so in Germany, dictatorship could bloom freely only when the weeds of Socialism were removed. Thyssen might have been temporarily charmed into the devout rank and file of the Party by the magic of the Fuehrer; but the big trusts do continue to pull the wires, and the protective colouring of the Nazi citizen may as well disappear after the charm is broken. It is idle to think that the Fuehrer has completely digested the 'friendly' economic classes, his totemic tribe, to increase his shamanic powers. The Soviet propagandists know better than the Democratic propagandists. That is why they address the German working classes in a grimly realistic way and do not waste themselves in futile talks on the virtues of Democracy.

Thus, once we agree that economic interests collect other interests and attitudes, reject some

and select a few in their development, and change forms accordingly, we will have to admit that the proper sociological analysis of dictatorship should start by placing each case in the context of the stage of its country's economic development and crisis and proceed with the study of the consequent disposition of social forces. This method is more realistic and orderly, though less precise, than classification by types. That done, the sociologist will probably conclude that the essence of modern dictatorship as such is the betrayal not merely of political democracy and liberal traditions but also of economic democracy with its innate rationality and its impulses to progress.



## *Malthus*

No economist would be worthy of serious study a hundred years after his death if his speculations were not informed by a sociological outlook. To spread attention over so long a period, an economist would have to be more than an economist. Here, as elsewhere, the layman's appraisal is a sensible one. Today, Malthus' investigations into the high prices of corn, the nature and progress of rent and the measure of value, his treatise on Political Economy and his definition of its terms are forgotten. Only his Essay on Population has been selected to survive. It alone is in the focus.

I do not ask you to accept this empirical test. I have some logical tests for the thesis. A sociologist does not describe facts as such; he seeks to establish their correlations, which are twofold. Particular disciplines or systems collect and refine certain relevant data, but they remain isolated before the sociologist comes to connect them by discovering their inherent and changing relations. Then again, there is a constant interplay between the social factors and the non-social, the purely biological and the environmental. The sociologist would unfold and generalise the nature of this give and take. By methods well-known to science the general fea-

tures of agreement, difference or variation between the given and the acquired are discovered and framed in the shape of average tendencies. As these two types of relations are apt to repeat themselves, the sociologist may be said to be building on the fact of recurrence. Thus it is that Sociology belongs to the generalising sciences. It has a special kingdom of its own.

One of its founders was Adam Smith, another was Malthus. Malthus was certainly interested in the economic problems of the day as such, like duties on imported corn, wages, pauperism, etc. But he sought for those general relations between them that would explain the perennial connection between agriculture and industry on the one hand and poverty on the other. His enquiries seemed to suggest a ratio between the factors. Henceforth his main concern was to discover the nature of the man-land ratio, that is to say, the balance between natural resources and human needs. Natural resources then meant the food supply, and human needs the growing numbers. He concluded that the latter always tended to outstrip the former, and so the two must come to some understanding. In an ideal static society there would be balance and plenty all round. But in societies as they are, which alone are the subject-matter and the main concern of the sociologist, things are otherwise. If the equilibrium is upset there is wholesale lowering of the standard of comfort leading to pauperism. That was the essence of Malthus' work. Let us ex-

pand this cardinal proposition to understand the working of his method.

Malthus' concern was not about food-supply merely, for he was not a historian of agriculture nor a minister of food supplies, his interest was not the growth of numbers, he was neither a human biologist nor a psychologist of sex. In fact, these two sciences had not yet been born; he depended upon the little psychology of family life and reproduction he could guess, and a certain amount of knowledge of the habits of people he could acquire at home or by travel abroad. He was not an ethnologist or a historian of manners either. His interest was to find out the general features of food supply and the growth of population and deduce therefrom a wider generalisation about their relation. He succeeded eminently in his task, for his generalisations remain essentially true today. If we thus understand the nature of the problem he set to himself and the character of his cardinal attitudes, we find that much of the criticism of his general propositions on the basis of specific facts obtaining in one country and not in another is irrelevant. Thus the case either of India or China, of the U.S.A. in Carey's times or of Australia to-day, does not wring the withers of Malthus. Any instance, just because of its singularity, is non-recurring and individual. No heap of instances varying between themselves can militate against a sociological generalisation, just as the actual number of years lived by an individual may not

accord with the actual life rate of his group. The general and the particular seem to belong to two different realms in social sciences. Sociology, inasmuch as it is a generalising science of human relationships in their entirety and in their recurrence amidst change, might thus claim Malthus as its own.

The following quotations from his own writing will illustrate my point of view. "The situation of the labourer being then again tolerably comfortable"—i. e., after the decrease of birth and the development of land, "the restraints to population are in some degree loosened; and after a short period, the same retrograde and progressive movements, with respect to happiness, are repeated.... This sort of oscillation will not probably be obvious to common view; and it may be difficult even for the most attentive observer to calculate its periods." (*An Essay on the Principle of Population*, Ch. II). The repeated periodic oscillations are to Sociology what the uniformities are to natural sciences. In other words, Malthus' exercise was to generalise on the more or less constant elements in the shifting relations between social and non-social factors which govern human happiness or welfare.

That such was his regnant attitude would be further borne out by his use of two mathematical series indicating tendencies or progression, viz., the arithmetical and the geometric, in his major premise, and by the word 'constant' in his significant propositions. Human beings tend to multi-

ply *at least* in geometric progression, but subsistence tends to multiply *at most* by arithmetic progression; each of these factors tends to change by pressure of the social and the physical environment. The social habits are themselves the resultant of human desires and natural gifts of the environment, chiefly, in the matter of food. These two factors again interact upon one another. In other words, Malthus built upon change. The factors are changing, their relations are shifting; at any particular moment there may just as well be a balance, but there is always the danger of this balance being upset, unless Nature or human being themselves intervene, the latter course being preferable to the former.

Which are the constant elements in this seesaw? Malthus first describes an imaginary case, and then writes:

"In this supposition no limits whatever are placed to the produce of the earth. It may increase for ever and be greater than any assignable quantity; yet still the power of population being in every period so much superior, the increase of the human species can only be kept down to the level of the means of subsistence by the constant operation of the strong law of necessity, acting as a check upon the greater power." Here the word 'constant' does not signify anything static or fixed, for Malthus, in the next paragraph, when he is discussing the ultimate and the immediate checks, makes it clear that it is the fear of overstripping that is constant, i. e., operating every

moment. in spite of improvement in the position of either of these factors, the biological or the environmental.

Thus once we know what Malthus really meant, viz, the constant interplay of two changing sets of factors, the usual text-book criticisms appear to be unjust. Human numbers may be dwindling today in a particular country by the adoption of preventive methods, food-supply of a territory may be increasing today by leaps and bounds either as a result of scientific agriculture or of imports from abroad, the importance of the latter may have diminished now in consequence of industrial expansion, yet the constant fear of the latter overtaking the former survives, at the present moment, now, today. More of this later on.

Now, where generalisations are to be framed from two sets of phenomena both of which are moving, but one is stabler than the other, then limits are to be posited. The next step in the work of framing general propositions is the determination of the possible scope of the change. Malthus, as is well-known, was a keen student of mathematics. He was usually tied to the deductive method. This method was also popular in his time. Therefore, the limits of the inter-relation between growing numbers and growing food-supply, but at different tempos, were discovered by deduction. With such a technique of thinking and in such circumstances, the limiting conditions would have to be a progressive series starting

from an initial point, which by itself was fixed. And that is exactly what is to be found in Malthus' argument. In an imaginary case—Malthus usually starts from imaginary cases—he states: "The necessary effects of these two different rates of increase when brought together will be very striking...the human species would increase as the numbers 1, 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, 128, 256 and subsistence as 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. In two centuries the population would be to the means of subsistence as 256 to 9; in three centuries as 4096 to 13, and in 2,000 years the difference would be almost incalculable. In this supposition no limits whatever are placed to the produce of the earth."

There is another imaginary absolute limit necessitated by his method, viz., equality in conditions. "The preventive check, as far as it is voluntary, is peculiar to man," says he, for plants and animals are not troubled by the problem of supporting their offspring. "In a state of equality, if such can exist, this would be a simple question. In the present state of society other considerations occur." The contrast between the static and the dynamic, the imaginary and the actual is to be noted. At present, human beings lower their standard of comfort. Malthus' allegiance to the deductive method could not remain whole-hearted.

There are two other zero-points, or imaginary social situations; an unlimited territory to be distributed, and an unlimited wages-fund to be

disbursed. With reference to the former Malthus says, in his last edition: "The rate according to which the productions of the earth may be supposed to increase, it will not be easy to determine. Of this, however, we may be perfectly certain, that the ratio of their increase in a limited territory must be of a totally different nature from the increase of population. A thousand millions are just as easily doubled every twenty-five years by the power of population as a thousand. But the food to support the increase from the greater number will by no means be obtained with the same facility. Man is necessarily confined in room. When acre has been added to acre till all the fertile land is occupied, the yearly increase of food must depend upon the melioration of the land already in possession. This is a fund which from the nature of all soils, instead of increasing, must be gradually decreasing. But population, could it be supplied with food, will go on with unexhausted vigour; and the increase of one period would furnish the power of a greater increase the next, and this without any limit." A similar argument is offered for the wages-fund, which being unlimited, will not allow the problem to arise.

These zero-points are imaginary nothingnesses. Yet they are mentioned to bring the realities into relief, as they should be done by one who reasons deductively. They are not essential to the need of discovering the actual limits constantly obtaining in a given society at a certain



specified period. They are of secondary importance to the social realist, which Malthus undoubtedly was. For him the actual limits.

The character of the actual limits is governed by the difference in the rates of progress of human numbers and subsistence. In between them come the habits of people, which also are changing. In Malthus' language, "In general their tendency is to change together." When population increases, wealth or the means of purchasing subsistence increases; when the latter increases, more people marry and beget more. Then the hare of numbers catches the tortoise of subsistence. In consequence, the standard of comfort is lowered. Malthus writes, "When the funds for the maintenance of labour are rapidly increasing, and the labourer commands a large portion of necessities, it is to be expected that if he has the opportunity of exchanging his superfluous goods for conveniences and comforts, he will acquire a taste for these conveniences and his habits will be formed accordingly. On the other hand, it generally happens that, when the funds for the maintenance become merely stationary, such habits, if they ever existed, are found to give way; and, before the population comes to a stop, the standard of comfort is essentially lowered."

Therefore, in actuality, there are three types of limits—in the purely physical environment, in the social environment, and what is curious in the writing of a person, in the purely human. Malthus, the priest, was a humanist and did not be-

lieve in divine redemption. The physical limit is that of diminishing returns from land, the inexorability of which Malthus divined before Ricardo. The limits of the social environment are war, pestilence human misery or vice, and a lowered standard of living or pauperism, the evil that was most obvious in his times on account of lowered wages, high prices of foodstuff, and above all, the bungling of Poor Law administration by the system of outdoor relief and bread schedules. (These economic effects he hoped to partially counteract by stiffer Poor Laws, by education and by Protection). Another socio-economic limit is wages itself. Malthus, in the previous quotation from his *Political Economy*, seems to suggest that wages, which is the outcome of the interplay of the demand and the supply of labour, does determine the standard of life of the labourer. For though the standard of life plays a secondary role here, Malthus gives it a primary one in his *Essay on Population*. In that sense he might be held to be a precursor of the standard of living theory of wages. Other factors like political despotism or liberty, education or ignorance are also included in the social limit. The most important limits however are what human beings set to themselves, individually, viz., postponement of marriage and prudential self-restraint after marriage. Obviously, the two latter limits vary more than the first. Yet, within such a shifting scope population grows at a much faster rate than subsistence. In other words, all limits

in Malthus' writings are limiting conditions. This is exactly the ambit of the operation of causal relations in Sociology.

Now when we talk about limits we are apt to think of an upper and a lower one. An upper one of subsistence beyond which population cannot pass would be inconceivable, as it would go against the spirit of Malthus' generalisation, viz., that population increases at a faster rate than subsistence even in an unlimited territory with every inch of it fertile and producing its utmost and with an unlimited wages fund and with a perfect equality of conditions. Such is also not the sociological way. The absolute limits mentioned before, or the zero-points in the deductive process, as has been pointed out already, are imaginary situations from which factors that are alleged to interfere with the operation of the two selected factors, viz, human numbers and subsistence, are artificially removed to allow the same operation to be studied in an atmosphere of academic purity, in a spirit of scientific asceticism. In such frictionless situations the quicker growth of population is seen at its best. The upper and the lower limits which the man in the street associates with the marking of spatial extent are different from those necessary for the clearing of the ground by the deductionist. This is an important point to be remembered, for it answers much of the usual criticism. The real problem of population, as Malthus understood it, is not what would happen when atoms are split releasing

energy that would turn Earth into Paradise. or when equality in all spheres is reached. Malthus might well have retorted, 'When the heaven falls, we will catch the swallows. Meanwhile, this limited earth remains where it was, under the blue vault, full of vice, misery, pauperism, disease, pestilence and war, unless man redeems it.'

There is only one sense in which the term upper or lower limit can be understood, viz., of a limiting condition that obtains throughout the process (as opposed to the beginning or the end of the process) of interaction between man and land. Halevy in his *History of Philosophical Radicalism* (p. 238) has understood it in this way. He writes: "But if the means of subsistence are a limiting condition in the sense that population cannot in a lasting way either rise above or sink below this limit, then we can say with scientific exactness that the amount of subsistence determines the number of consumers." In other words, the real problem is "not whether population in course of time outruns the means of subsistence," but the opposite state viz., "whether the silent pressure of excessive numbers is now being felt in the form of unemployment, rising prices and encroachments upon the standard of life in the industrial centres." (Wright's *Population*, p. 176). In still other words, "the constant operation of the checks to population which arise out of want of food" (Wright, p. 33) is constantly being emphasised throughout Malthus' writings.

Here it is to be admitted that his use of mathe-

mathematical series cannot be taken as laying the foundation-stone either of the statistical or of the mathematical study of population. The statement about numbers increasing at least in the geometric and food supply at most in arithmetic progression is a double approximation. The inverse ratio between preventive and positive checks is also a guess-work. Such generalisations are attempts to understand the nature of limiting conditions. What is wanted today in the sociological study of population is, therefore, a refinement of those limiting conditions of the inter-functioning of the changing factors noted above. Studies of the changing factors belong to different and particular disciplines. These alone can refine Malthus' findings. The sociologist will build on them, and then only will he find if the fear of overstripping is constant or not.

Before I indicate ways of refinement of the actual limiting conditions I shall mention certain striking similarities in the historical situation, then and now. For, the sociologist can only take the recurring factors. That Malthus had sensed the recurrence of certain socio-economic factors and the persistence of their interplay at the very initial stage of the present capitalistic order redounds partly to the credit of the deductive method that every discoverer of an abiding generalisation adopts and partly to his genius for hitting upon the essentials. In other words, although the social and physical factors have changed considerably, his main propositions about the limiting

conditions of the number and subsistence ratio remain as they were. Thus, instead of the Napoleonic War we have had the Great War, for the Industrial Revolution and its consequent dislocation of the rural economy and trade of England, we have the impact of new industrialism on the East, particularly, on those countries which had so long been supplying raw materials to Europe and had built up their prosperity by exchanging them for its manufactured goods, in which procedure there was a comparatively greater gain to Europe per unit of labour and capital. In this connexion the following lines from the Essay, Book III, Ch. XII sound prophetic.

"In the wildness of speculation it has been suggested, of course more in jest than in earnest, that Europe ought to grow its corn in America and devote itself solely to manufactures and commerce as the best sort of division of labour of the globe. But even on the extravagant supposition that the natural course of things might lead to such a division of labour for a time (in the XIX century it did, as Mr. Keynes has pointed out in *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*, Ch. II), and that by such means Europe could raise a population greater than its land could possibly support, (the colonies and India did duty for America, and India still does, to some extent) the consequences ought justly to be dreaded. (They were not, by the Victorian optimists). It is an unquestionable truth that it must answer to every territorial state in its natural progress to wealth (substitute na-

tional economy) to manufacture for itself, unless the countries from which it had purchased its manufactures possess some advantages peculiar to them besides capital and skill. (Reference is to the geographical advantages, and to comparative costs, of course, as understood by Adam Smith (in his plea for Free Trade). But when upon this principle America began (would begin) to withdraw its corn from Europe (the tariffs and subsidies by national governments served the same purpose) and the agricultural exertions of Europe were unable to make up the deficiency (notice the frantic attempts to settle people on land) it would certainly be felt that the temporary advantage of a greater degree of wealth and population, supposing them to have been really attained had been very dearly purchased by a long period of retrograde movements and misery." (In some of the outpourings of English newspapers about the effects of the Ottawa Agreements upon British trade and industry the phrase 'dearly purchased' occurs). This division of labour between Europe and America or other undeveloped countries of today (vide Greaves' *Modern Production among Backward Peoples*) is no longer a jest, nor is it an extravagant supposition. It is an earnest fact, and a very simple one of the economic life of the world. Bertrand Russell in his *Freedom and Organisation* refers to the modern transport-facilities, the technical improvements in agriculture and the rapid diminution of birth-rate among workers in general in this connexion, but con-

cludes "This is perhaps not a refutation of anything that Malthus said, but it has destroyed the importance of his theory so far as the white races are concerned. In Asia it remains important." Ay, there's the rub, for Europe and Asia are not now two different economic entities. Asia is the economic annexe of Europe. And Africa too. Asia and Africa between themselves can restore the importance of Malthus' theory, now that the States and Canada are safely out of the European picture. One is not sure about South America as well.

The Economic Crisis may be said to have covered the real issue. Even in 1934-35 the World Trade is shrunk like the wild ass's skin. Each country is hastily shutting itself inside protective barriers, as each city in India used to do against marauders. New national units have lengthened the total tariff wall, old countries have raised it. There has been a big increase in production, though not to its fullest extent, as has been pointed out by the Research Department of the Brooklyn Institute, but a bad division between classes and countries has spoilt its effects. The limiting conditions in the production of agricultural goods now operate covertly and indirectly, but none the less truly and surely, through attempts to establish national monopolies over them in the interest of national industries. No better symptoms are needed than the maldistribution of agricultural products in the world, the loss of equilibrium of agricultural and industrial eco-



nomies between different countries and also within the same country. There is hardly any government today that does not feel hard pressed to meet the conflicting demands of industrial and agricultural interests upon its attention. Malthus' statement about the calico printers getting rich at the expense of agricultural labourers is worth quoting.

"I cannot conceive anything much more detestable than the idea of knowingly condemning the labourers of this country to the rags and wretched cabins of Ireland for the purpose of selling a few more broad cloths and calicoes. The wealth and powers of a nation are, after all, only desirable as they contribute to happiness"—*Essay*, Book IV, Ch. X.

The English labourers do no longer go to Ireland (the Italian labourers were going, and do still want to go, everywhere), nor do they live in wretched cabins. Yet, as even Sir William Beveridge never fails to point out, the rigidity of wages, brought about by the concerted action of Trade Unions has been partly responsible for the high figure of unemployment in recent years. The fact is this: today agricultural operations can continue either under the stimulus of rising prices or by the fiat of the State backed up by national considerations.

Then, again, birth-rate is diminishing in the Western countries, but the more or less irreducible death-rate of civilised countries hides the real increase. Even differential birth-rate tends to be

level (World Population Conference Reports) on account of the spread of those practices which Malthus had condemned as impure. These belong to the same category as limited market and anti-immigration laws, for they betray a constant fear about number catching up subsistence. When wage-earners become protectionists and anti-immigrationists, there must be something true in Malthus even for today.

Today, Unemployment Insurance has come in on the shoulders of an old theory, viz., the right to maintenance. The uncovenanted benefits, the gap-system, the mounting expenditure, the persistence of Poor Law, the introduction of Assistance Boards in the Act of 1934, including the opposition thereto, however, remind us of the Gilbert Act of 1782, the Act of 1784, the Speenhamland Bread Policy, and what happened to Poor Law administration up till the Act of 1834.

One possible objection to the above line of argument may be raised here. Are all these phenomena, poverty, etc., recurring or persisting? In other words, does poverty repeat itself, or does it recur under conditions? Is it a gift of the gods or is it man-made? Did Malthus know that it was implicit in the system of production which was then being inaugurated? The honest answer is in the negative. It can be proved from his writings that he was no philosopher of history. He was interested in the poor, but his concern was about the class to which he belonged. He remained a sociologist showing the interlocking of

factors. We give him his minimum dues when we say that certain phenomena of today resemble those which he dealt with and generalised from, and conclude that he struck upon their right formal relations. That persistence which is perversely recurring to give some unity to history was certainly beyond his scope. Probably, why should such things recur could not trouble one who wrote so early as he did. In any case, as students of Sociology, we notice the resemblance that tends to merge into recurrence without shaping itself into the persistence of history. New social factors there may be, and probably, there are, but they call only for refinements of his generalisations so long as the order which he saw emerging continues in some shape or the other. The Malthusian Devil is our Living Presence.

Refinement can proceed along the lines laid down in his treatment, The following are suggested:

(1) The distribution of population over the world's surface has to be mapped out with reference to resources. In Malthus' time emigration was not a release. In the nineteenth century, it was. In the twentieth, emigration has been stopped or controlled for political, racial and economic reasons. Therefore, an adjustment on the basis of the balance between resources and needs in different countries has to be worked out to eliminate non-essential factors, particularly, the political and the racial ones. Their disturbance is acute, particularly in South-Eastern Asia, i. e.,

in China, the Malayas, and India, where density in rural areas is high, birth-rate is high, death-rate is high, and the land has been cultivated for long and very intensively.

(2) For each local unit or economic zone, the balance or the ratio will have to be struck. Thus, on the one hand, economic surveys, and on the other, social surveys, of the habits, customs and the folkways of the people will have to be undertaken. In Malthus' times such regional studies were not known. Without such studies of economic and ethnic groups, the influence of social habits on marriage, birth and death-rates cannot be understood and the limits of supportable population ascertained with any exactitude.

From the point of view of accuracy;

(3) Mathematical and statistical analysis of the growth and drift of population and of resources is essential; and

(4) a concept is necessary. There is the new concept of the optimum. Optimum is understood in different ways among which the highest average income per capita and the highest average expectation of life are the two most important. The former is purely economic, in the hands of Prof. Cannan, and bio-economic with Prof. Carr-Saunders. The latter is purely biological with Dr. Pearl, but bio-social with Dr. Radhakamal Mukherji. Dr. Mukherji's definition of the optimum is based on the fact that certain biological considerations determine the optimal number supportable in a particular region. Each zone, in

the light of a new development of social biology, i. e., of ecology, has a definite order of distribution of plant, animal and human communities. Social ecology deals with the dynamic interdependence manifest in the balance between them and in the constant tendency of that balance to be upset.

Thus it is that a sociological study of population along the lines suggested in Malthus will relate the findings of different sciences, most of them new and biological, to determine more exactly than he could ever do, the subtle workings of the constantly operating but, usually, dramatically recurrent tendencies towards a loss of equilibrium between resources and human needs. If such findings support Malthus, he remains; if they do not, he goes out.\*

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\* Malthus' Centenary Proceedings (Feb. 1935) held at the Lucknow University. The author does not feel it necessary to change his views in the light of recent phenomena. In fact, they support Malthus.

### *The Optimum in Recent Population Theories*

The concept of the Optimum marks a definite step in the advance of economic theory. There is hardly any branch of economic thought which has not gained by it. In the structure of industry as well as in public finance, the optimum unit is sought to be defined, if not with the professed view of shaping policies, at least, to clear the cobwebs of economic thinking. Nowhere is the importance of the concept more dominant than in the study of population. Students of population problems now agree that without the concept of the Optimum, generalisations about growth and density, on the one hand, and resources, on the other, partake of the nature of individual and collective wish-fulfilment. If we are to exclude subjective considerations and religious and political necessities and bring the subject of economic behaviour to the level of objective discussion, we will have to devise methods more or less similar to those of natural scientists. Laboratory experiments are not always possible with human beings, though the latter in their primary, i. e., repetitive behaviours, are not always distinguishable from other animals or even flies. Of course, neither experiments nor quantitative measurements are the be-all and end-all of natural sciences. Concepts like the normal solution or

physical constants are equally necessary. This logical method has been 'productive of immense good in the matter of precision, prediction and fresh knowledge. It should also succeed in other branches of knowledge where the human variable and the social imponderable, which have so long dismayed 'scientific' intelligence, are expected to fall in line under the pressure of new advances in statistics and logic. In fine, the success of modern scientific method dictates the necessity of the concept of the Optimum.

But, probably, that is not the whole story. The very development of economic thought contained within itself a motive-power for the drive towards the Optimum. In Malthus' path-breaking generalisations about population and food supply we notice the theoretical searchings for some limits. As I have pointed out 'previously, Malthus envisaged, as was natural to one committed to the deductive method, three absolute limits, viz., equality of conditions, an unlimited territory and an unlimited wages-fund. Besides these, there were three other limiting conditions: (1) the physical, i e., the law of diminishing return : here, (as Prof. Cannan has taken pains to point out in his 'A Review of Economic Theory') the priority of Malthus over West and Ricardo may be granted without admitting that Malthus was fully conscious of the implications of his observation, say, as John Stuart Mill could be : (2) the socio-economic: here came the famous positive checks including human misery, vice, lowered standard

of living, in short, all that which came in the wake of increased price of food-stuff and the bungling of the poor law and its attendant evils; (3) the individual limits which human beings deliberately set to themselves in the way of postponement of marriage and prudential self-restraint. Within such limits Malthusian generalisations were framed. In other words, the first three were the basic assumptions, and the latter three the limiting conditions. By themselves these limits were not rigid; but for the study of population, which was an arena for the play of interactions between the physical and the human, they were clearly definitive of the scope of the discussion. Elasticity of treatment is as stringent a necessity as definition of the scope of the subject. Both are assured in the tenor of Malthus' argument; eg, (a) in his double approximation implicit in the use of *at least* and *at most* in the two mathematical generalisations, and (b) in the care which he bestows on explaining that his mathematical form was to be understood as setting the upper limit, i. e., the outside limit, beyond which the population would not be expected to rise in any lasting manner. (Essay, 2nd Edition, pp 11-12). As Halevy,\* Wright,† and Fairchild,‡ have pointed out, Malthus was concerned with the dynamics of the process, i. e., with the constant operation of the different

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\* History of Phil. Rad., 288.

† Population, 38, 176.

‡ Paper on the Optimum Population in the World, Population Conference 1927. p.84, Proceedings



forces between themselves within a sphere of defined conditions. In other words, the limits would act and be reacted upon by the interplay of the forces inside like the inner side of a bowl by the pellets within.

Logically, very little can be urged against Malthus. His general proposition about the tendencies still remains as the base of constant operation against the onslaught of later economists whose sole achievement has been the capture of the outposts. On the other hand, the base wants refinement or repair in the light of modern technique and apparatus of economic thinking. Certain serious criticisms have been brought recently against his main propositions:

(A) "To imagine that the Essay on the Principle of Population was ever based on the Law of Diminishing Returns is to confuse Malthusianism as expounded by John Stuart Mill with Malthusianism as expounded by Malthus"\* (Cannan—*Theories of Production and Distribution*, p. 144). Prof. L. Robbins has played on the above theme and writes in his *Essay on the Optimum Theory of Population* (London *Essays in Economics*, p. 105). "No interaction between the population

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\* We must remember that the ground for this shift in emphasis was prepared by John Stuart Mill, the Utilitarian. The connexion between his type of social ethics and individualism is too well known to need any discussion. Yet the actual responsibility of increasing numbers for improvement and the question that 'part at least of the progress of improvement was only capable of being realised by a larger population are not attended to'—Robbins, p. 111

and the resources at its disposal is postulated. All that Malthus really does is to discuss the respective probabilities of human and agricultural increase and the effects of the latter on the former. The part played by increasing numbers in increasing the produce—even in its narrowest sense—he leaves almost undiscussed.' At least, this latter half of the problem, viz, the incidence of growth of population upon productivity of individual effort, which has assumed greater importance in economic theory of late, was 'quite subsidiary to the former' in the Essay. In other words, *the return per capita was not his chief concern*. It is along this line that the modern economic theory of population has progressed, particularly in England, and led to the concept of the Optimum,

This particular development was urged by following theoretical considerations.

In the interest of clear thinking a static economic society had to be presupposed. The static society logically meant that the limiting conditions had to be conceived as limits. The method adopted by theorists of production and distribution could hardly be considered as suitable to the interplay of the growth of numbers and resources *at one and the same time*. Yet the English economists were too great to have missed the fact of the interplay. Their method was therefore to study one factor at a time and consider all others as remaining the same during that period of discussion. The object was noble, and the economists wanted to take other factors in their turn. But

life was too short and other factors would not remain the same. Thus it was that during the last period of the nineteenth century, in the English economic thought on population, "the part played by increasing numbers in increasing the produce" became the focus of discussion, inasmuch as this aspect of the question, viz., the interplay as opposed to mere ratio, had not been sufficiently gone into.

The result of this mediation has been a very important gain—viz., the idea of return per head, as distinguished from Mill's degree of industrial progress and total aggregate and Cannan's earlier idea of maximum productiveness. This idea has led to the recognition of the necessity of having a concept which will act as the standard of judging very concrete situations, commonly and empirically known as over-population and under-population. The concept serves the purpose of the bar in the hurdle. The proof of the existence of the bar is offered by the return per head—which is very concrete indeed—and Optimum is to be determined by the highest average income per capita. At the critical moment of crossing, Optimum is the highest average income per capita. Even Prof. Carr-Saunders, who is primarily a bio economist, comes to the same definition after a laborious attempt. "As regards quantitative problems we saw that from the first period of history onward....it was of the utmost importance for every group to approximate to the optimum number. This is the number which—taking

into consideration the nature of the environment, the degree of the skill employed, the habits and customs of the people concerned, and all other relevant facts – gives the highest average return per head. This number is not fixed once and for all." While appreciating the spirit of the last sentence we are still bound to notice that here the optimum is the optimum number, which again is the equilibrating number. Prof. Wolfe, himself a champion of the concept of the optimum, writes (March 1934, *American Journal of Sociology*), "To call such a balance an 'Optimum' is to rob the term of any economic or cultural significance. Not every maximum is an optimum. If a species multiplies up to the limit of its resources in such a way as to maintain "balance of nature" between its own numbers (kept as high as this balance permits) and its resources, this maximum can be regarded as an optimum only by a personified "Nature" which traditionally is always bent on placing as much life on a given area as possible. From a constructive economic, cultural, or welfare point of view such an optimum is a delusion." Prof. Wolfe is not fair to Prof. Carr-Saunders who gives numerous examples of human control and refers to 'an approximation to the desirable number.' The latter's interests are economical and biological while Prof. Wolfe's is mainly economical, *i.e.*, as economical as the cultural impulse of American school of Sociology will allow him to be. Both have come to the highest average income per capita, being compelled by the urgency of the

economic factor in social development and the necessity of establishing a clear connection between the effects of increasing population on production and those of progress in industry on increasing numbers. For them it is the only concrete thing, even when it is variable and not easily amenable to measurement.

Prof. Wolfe's own criterion of the optimum is the maximum per capita of consumer's income. As his language is vigorous and malleable, it is best to quote him. In December 1924 in a paper before the Sixth Meeting of the American Statistical Association (since collected by L. Dublin as *Population Problems*) the real population problem is considered as "that of attaining, and maintaining, the most productive ratio between population and natural resources. Productivity is to be measured by the per capita income of ultimate consumers' goods. This ratio is called the Optimum, and a population of this most efficient size the optimum population. The notion of the optimum is frankly a utilitarian and an individualistic concept." Later on, the difficulties offered by the large number of the variables are recognised only to be dismissed by the statement, 'the ideal of the optimum as the criterion of a rational policy still retains its validity.' How then to have an idea of this ideal of the optimum? Not by statistics of national wealth, not even by the price-index, but by an index of the inventory of consumers' goods produced each year. Failing this, the price-index of money income less savings and reinvestments will

do. Later on, in the same paper, Prof. Wolfe writes. 'Practically the population problem is in large measure a problem in social psychology: for the attainment of a rationally adjusted birthrate depends upon the attitude of the whole people.' Still later, 'But psychological factors are not always predictable. Herein lay the defect of Malthus' analysis. Herein also lies a great defect of current population literature.' In March 1934, (*American Journal of Sociology*) Prof. Wolfe has grown less charitable towards welfare-economists but has retained his main conviction. "When some years ago I defined the Optimum population as that population which with given natural resources, state of the arts, and standard of working time would secure the longest possible per capita product of consumers' goods, I thought that I was expressing a fairly definite and potentially measurable (though not static) criterion. I still think so." The point to be noticed here is this: Prof. Wolfe, as is evident from the word 'given,' is following the method that has been indicated before, and he is basing his arguments on a static society. Hence his disavowal of the 'static' criterion is not convincing. Nor is his avowal that every maximum is not the optimum, because the 'optimum is very much like the maximum in a static society. The fact is that Prof. Wolfe's sociology is sounder than his economic thinking. For, as Prof. Robbins in his Inaugural Address on the Present Position of Economic Science took pains to point out, (*Economica*, March 1930), 'the

old plan of analysing "one thing at a time" has definitely broken down—outside very narrow limits.....Only by abandoning this assumption of others remaining the same and contemplating the process of price-determination as a whole do we emancipate ourselves from these difficulties " ..... "One of the most hopeful developments of the present time is the disposition of theoretical economists to release more than one variable from the pound of *ceteris paribus*. The theory becomes more complex, but its application becomes more practicable "

Chastened by the above quotation we can think less in term of the largest possible per capita product of consumers' goods, and more in terms, however, less precise, of welfare. This change is not a throw-back from reason and objectivity to sentiment and feeling (American Journal of Sociology 1934. 588—90) but a remedy called forth by the 'logical efficiency' implicit in the method of taking one at a time, which has been and still continues to be the bane of thinking in social sciences. In my opinion, if, as Prof Keynes' in his Introduction to the Series of Cambridge Handbooks maintains, "The Theory of Economics.....is a method rather than a doctrine, an apparatus of the mind, a technique of thinking," then the interests of understanding the problem of population in all its complex interlocking of variables are more imperative than the necessity of making a handy concept precise by indices. In other words, the concept of the opti-

mum is neither the ideal nor the practical test of an ideational construct as yet, although practical conclusions will still continue to be reached by pre-optimum generalisations about population, as is happening in the case of modern scientific theory and applied Science (B. Russell—*Religion and Science*, p. 245).

(B) We have so far discussed one serious criticism of Malthusian generalisations, *viz.*, the neglect of the influence of increasing numbers on increasing the produce. We also know how, due to John Stuart Mill's insistence on the Law of Diminishing Returns and the subsequent development of the concept of the return per capita, the other concept of the optimum population with its test of the highest average return per capita was formed by Prof. Cannan to refine the theory of population. In the hands of his followers, the word 'highest' remains. But as to what follows there is a variety of opinions. Is it the highest number or is it the highest level of material comfort? These two may be one when, as Dalton suggests, (*Theory of Population, Economica*, March, 1928) "changes in numbers influence economic welfare only through changes in production per head and second, that maximum economic welfare means maximum economic welfare *per head*, and not in the aggregate." Prof. Wolfe's statement that the concept of the optimum is individualistic seems to clinch the issue. And yet, as he himself points out in his article in the *Encycl. of Social Sciences*, the distribution of the national



wealth to a great extent affects the per head income. Dr. Dalton would add to it "the subjective costs of production and the distribution of these costs between persons and on the degree of steadiness, through time, of economic life and, in particular, of personal incomes and employment." Later on, "A change in tastes and, as a special case of this, a change in the relative importance to lower subjective costs and increased income" is mentioned as equally relevant. Dr. Dalton says, however, that "change in numbers acts more directly and unequivocally on productiveness" than on the other items. This was written in 1928. After that date the steadiness of economic life was further removed, the distribution of national wealth into personal incomes still more disturbed by the comparative rigidity of the wages-level and the system of relief to unemployment. Thus it is that the problem of distribution has become more relevant to a study of the optimum from the point of view of maximum economic welfare than ever before. Consequently, it has grown more urgent in the study of the optimum in population inasmuch as the affected distribution of national wealth into personal incomes and subjective costs has led to the differential fertility among different occupational groups with different real incomes.

This then is the second criticism against Malthus. *Pace* his sympathy for the labourers as against the calico-printers the fact is undisputed that he was serving the interests of the class to

which he belonged. Although the proletariat was rising in his time, it had not yet split up into different occupational and income groups. His ideas about the connexion between birth-rate and death-rate were crude. High birth-rate and high death-rate went together. Conversely, if death-rate fell, as it did, he believed that births and marriages would also be reduced (Essay, p. 219, Nineteenth Edition, also p. 144; London Essays, Dr. M. Buer: *The Mal. Controversy*) "through increased prudential restraint due to a higher standard of life." Very little beyond this can be found in Malthus. He was certainly limited by his times when increased production was the main concern of the calico printers and economists alike, and therefore, when the efficient cause for improvement in the standard of life of any individual was to be found by dividing a greater amount of national wealth by a relatively smaller number of individuals.

It was left to later times, probably to Marx whose suspicion of Malthusian generalisations was notorious, to stress the two major deficiencies in them. For Marx, there was no fixed law of population, and any generalisation about it would be determined by the circumstances of the period. In the period of capitalism, on account of the greater increase of fixed or constant capital than of the variable or circulating capital, the former accumulates more rapidly in the shape of production goods, and labourers are consequently less needed. In other words, greater use of machinery creates a relatively surplus population of labourers. As Marx

writes (Capital 506 pp., Aveling's Translation), "The labouring population therefore produces, along with the accumulation of capital produced by it, the means by which itself is made relatively superfluous—is turned into a relatively superfluous population—and it does this to an always increasing extent. This is a law of population peculiar to the capitalist mode of production; and, in fact, every special historic mode of production has its own special laws of population, historically valid within its limits alone. An abstract law of population exists for plants and animals only, and only in so far as man has not interfered with them." An 'economic' criticism of the above view is not difficult. It is however more relevant to note the emphasis that Marx gave to the historical validity of any theory about population depending on the prevalent mode of production with its attendant scheme of distribution leading to exploitation and misery. Marx is not studied for population problems, but if he is, the effect of his teachings should tend towards the following conclusion viz., that the distribution of national wealth is as important a point in material welfare or highest possible or average income per capita (which is the economists' criterion of optimum population) as production by increased numbers. It is also pertinent to observe that in Marxian analysis the distribution of consumable goods is adversely affected by the greater accumulation of production goods in the present mode of production. Yet, the consumable goods can, in a sense, become the final

test of the optimum. As Prof. Wolfe, in the *En. of Social Sciences*, writes: "A well rounded population theory...will recognise, with Marx, that the population problem, (he means the dynamic theory of population, a branch of dynamic economics, in which the 'institutional approach is more likely to yield applicable generalisations than the older and more conventional method') in the form it is likely to take in the next 50 years, is more one of distribution than of production."

The relation between the production goods and consumers' goods is not yet settled. Prof. Wolfe's position is puzzling. Yet the distribution side of the question has to be emphasised even at the expense of a utilitarian, a concrete, a handy or a *precise test* 'either as stabilised index of physical production of consumers' goods for optimum or maximum, (the words 'or' is to be noted) or as prosperity index., 'which as Wolfe himself has pointed out, is liable to be tampered with (as in Germany for the Dawes plan) by nationalistic considerations to which the concept of the optimum is claimed to be superior. Pro. Kuczynski's remarks on Prof. Fairchild's paper on Optimum Population (in the Proceedings of the World Population Conference, p. 110, in which Prof. Fairchild wanted to add the cultural factors to the ultimate consumable goods) are well worth quoting. 'All that seems desirable is a more even distribution of the national income; but this apparently has little to do with the absolute number of people, since the contrast of misery and wealth is stronger

in the United States and in other countries which certainly are more overpopulated. I venture even to say that, if the U.S. with double her present population were to have an average standard of living by 10 per cent lower than the present one, but with a better distribution of the national income, I would see no reason why she should restrict her population in order just to maintain the present average. In fact, neither the average standard of living nor the income percentage available for cultural wants will furnish a satisfactory criterion; since both may increase in a society where the wealthy get richer and the masses get poorer." He suggests that the standard of living tests should be "supplemented by other tests" I conclude with a similar plea particularly when such other purely economic tests of variations from the optimum like real income, unemployment, the movements of real rates of exchange fail completely; logically, as Robbins has shown in the first case (pp. 125, *London Essays*) and Dr. Dalton in the third (*Economica*, March 1928, p 38), and statistically, as shown by Sir Wm. Beveridge (*Ec. Journal* 1923). Beveridge says: "In my opinion, Prof. Robbins, following Mises, has shown an admirable sense of the true complexity of the problem of discovering any adequate test of maximum return by splitting up, i.e., by narrowing the problem into absolute and relative over-population. In the first, the point of maximum return has been passed in the world as a whole, in the second, under less favourable conditions of work, 'other

things remaining equal,' a unit of labour is less productive in a particular region than in any other place." In short, according to Beveridge, the question of absolute over-population is largely a matter of international concern, and that of the latter a subject for regional study.

Probably, the international aspect of the question is eventually one of inter-regional distribution of population, with all that it means in the way of strategic considerations, the evolution of zonal institutions and the growth of necessary conventions like relaxation of anti-immigration laws and gentlemen's agreements about quota and civic rights. In which case, regionalism, both in the external aspect of mutual adjustments between regions and in the internal one of social ecology, offers the much needed refinement to the theory of population. Dr. Radhakamal Mukerjee in his *Migrant Asia*, *Political Economy of Population*, and *Institutional Theory of Economics* has addressed himself to that task. The relevant points of his treatment centre in his concept of the Integral Optimum. Starting from the interdependence of political, economic, and cultural elements, he concludes that "the true optimum of population is the integral optimum which is based on a harmonious coordination of optima in the successive levels of ecology, economy and state in respect of (a) the expectation of life, (b) real income, and (c) personal happiness and self-expression, all these from the individual standpoint and of (a) the stability of the economic base and

occupational balance, (b) the regularity and continuity of employment, and (c) national security and power, all of the latter from the collective standpoint." Obviously, as Dr. Mukerjee admits, such a concept is a 'hypothesis' or a 'social aspiration'; and therefore, the whole of it is not amenable to statistical treatment. But he feels that 'the tool of discussion' or the 'master-frame of reference' acquires its significance from the fact that a marked divergence from it registers a decline in the standard of living and in other such measurable items of collective existence. We share his views; because the optimum is a construct, which by itself is real and not real at one and the same time, real in the sense of a dividing line, and unreal in so far as no actual condition is identifiable with it.

There is a further development in Dr. Mukerjee's concept of integral optimum from the points of view of principles governing the growth of numbers and norms of their control. Demographically; vitality, health, average expectation of life, longevity and other factors making for biological fitness may be left to the actuary with his probability-curves and equations. Similarly, occupational balance making for full employment can be treated with the refined technique of equi-marginal satisfactions and utilities. But the ecological aspect has received greater attention of late from Dr. Mukerjee, (Social Ecology). Here, the Social distance and mobility have been discussed to discover the norm of ecological fitness of a com-

munity on 'a continuing basis.' Be it noted that the conservation and development of natural resources play an important part in the building up of the norm. These concepts are not immeasurable. What is not computable, however, is the "sociological principle of cultural selection and control governing the choice of individual and collective ends, and the norm of power and prestige of the organised state and culture—which measures natural security," and, may we add, national progress. Therefore, the concept of the integral optimum while retaining its logical validity as a 'tool', 'norm', 'hypothesis', 'a master-frame of reference', better still, a construct, adds the ecological content to it and puts it in the context of institutions obtaining in a cultural region. (Institution Theory of Economics—Chap. 2). But it unfortunately leaves the problem of distribution where it was before. So, a very fruitful contribution to the theory of Population will be made by those who will synthesise the solutions of the problems of regions with those of distribution.



### *The Logical Validity of the Optimum*

The word 'Optimum' has come to stay in the study of population problems. Whatever might be the approach, be it cultural (E. T. Hiller-Journal of Pol. Economy, October, 1930, pp. 523-51) or socio-economic (Fairchild-World Popn. Conference 1927, Proc. 72-85), socio-biological (Dr. R. K. Mookerji—The American Journal of Sociology, March, 1933 and November, 1934); bio-economic (Carr-Saunders—The Population Problem, and Population) or purely economic (A. B. Wolfe in Am. J. of Sociology March, 1934 and in the Ency. of Social Sciences, Population Problems—Edited by Dublin, H. Dalton—The Theory of Population in the Economica—March 1928, L. Robbins—The Optimum Theory of Popn. in the London Essays in Economics, Prof. Canan, particularly in his Review of Economic Theory—81-87), or statistical (G.E. Hoover—The Quantative Optimum of Popn. Annals of the Amer. Ac of Pol. & Soc. Science July 1932), we may profit by the use of the word Optimum so long as the following logical conditions are fulfilled:—

(1) 'We should not demand from it anything more than it can yield. It is in the nature of pure fiction, which means that "nothing in the actual world can be proved to exist or correspond to it." (Vaihinger—The Philosophy of As If, p. 207). The reality to which it is held to correspond may

or may not exist. The fact is that the Optimum demands a new type of judgment from its use. Let us call the Optimum  $O$  and a given number of people in a milieu, cultural or ecological,  $P$ . In our new type of judgment,  $P$  is taken as it were  $O$ , and at the same time  $P$  is treated as if it were  $O$  although it is not  $O$ .  $P$  is never as taken as  $=O$ , nor is it boldly asserted that  $P$  can never be equal to  $O$ . All that is postulated is  $P$  is perhaps  $O$ , and perhaps not  $O$ . In any judgment concerning the Optimum there is a 'simultaneous protest against the idea of its objective validity, but with an express insistence upon its subjective significance'—Vaihinger 261. The word subjective significance is to be understood in the sense in which the hypothetical connection between not only the real and the possible but also between the unreal and non-possible presuppositions is being expressed. If  $O$  were  $P$ , then  $O$  would be subject to the laws of  $P$ . Each of the two statements here is false, yet the compound statement is true and necessary. Here  $P$  is not considered as equal to  $O$ , only  $P$  is being compared and equated with the consequences which flow from and are bound up with it.  $P=O$  is never asserted, nor is  $P$  can never be  $O$ . Therefore a complex type of judgment has to be used in the study of the Optimum, negative inasmuch as  $P=O$  is invalid, positive, inasmuch as in spite of the above invalidity some valid conclusions may emerge by treating the invalid, as if it were valid. It is partly categorical and partly 'hypothetical, partly problematic and

partly assertive, even apodeictic, for it emphasises the possibility and the necessity of this method of enquiry. But the equation of P & O is simply fictive (Vaih. 252). Thus it is that the argument against the Optimum on the score of the variety of its variables and the non-conformity of any actual situation to it does not dislodge it from its position of extreme usefulness. (Thompson—Popn. Problems). Let us admit frankly that the Optimum does not exist in reality, but that it is to be treated as if it existed in order that any actual situation may be compared with the deduction therefrom.

Obviously, many writers do not look at the Optimum in this way. They take it as a hypothesis and apply what may be called Jevons' test, viz., agreement with a fact or a situation (Principles of Science, 510 Seq.). But, as Miss L. S. Stebbing has pointed out (A Modern Introduction to Logic p. 304), even in the three constituent conditions for the sufficiency of the hypothesis viz., (1) its capacity to be deductively developed into consequences that can be tested, (2) its harmoniousness with the laws of nature or of thought, and (3) agreement of the deduced consequences with the fact, it is to be noted that the hypothesis itself is not tested in any of the above three operations but only the consequences deduced therefrom. If any deduced consequence is shown by observation to be false, then the hypothesis cannot be said to be true. Yet, the hypothesis cannot be said to be wrong either. All that can be asserted is that the deduced conclusions will show that

the way in which the necessary modification of the hypothesis will have to be made. This proves the invalidity of Dr. Thompson's arguments (Popn. Prob.) and furnishes the *raison d'être* of Dr. Dalton's treatment of the question of the Optimum in the *Economica* March '28 or of Dr. Mukerji's in his numerous writings. The fact of the matter is that the idea of Optimum, when it is put up as a hypothesis, is a descriptive hypothesis, not explanatory or analogical. It only "serves the function of models" which enables the economist "to understand" the mode of connection between the facts for which it is trying to account" -- in the population problems, say between occupation, mobility and differential fertility on the one hand, and the highest average income per capita or expectation of life, on the other. Be the Optimum a fiction or a descriptive hypothesis (or the one leading to or inclusive of the other), we should be grateful if it offers a new orientation to previous knowledge and furnishes new consequences in thought and action, which alone are to be tested. In any case, Optimum is neither a theory nor a dogma.

(2) The second condition follows from the first. The Optimum should never be expected to be fixed and absolute. There will be as many optima as there will be groups of factors with at least one variable and one constant; and the series of optima will be ascending in the sense of increasing complexity and richness in significance. Such serial optima are more hypothetical than

fictive. But the Optimum remains just as Justice remains in the midst of conflicting and evolving codes of law and interpretations. Therefore, no matter whether today it is the death-rate that governs the birth-rate far more than the birth-rate governs the death-rate, or otherwise, the necessity of the Optimum survives.

(3) The third is a necessary divestment of the word Optimum of ethical valuations, and particularly the political ones. The word Optimum is the superlative of the word 'bonum'. Prof. Eddington writes (p. 283, *The Nature of the Physical World*) "The conception which it is so troublesome to apprehend is not "reality" but "reality" (loud cheers)". Similarly the Optimum, as the best or the most desirable adds to the difficulties of a logical approach to the subject. And the difficulties are already considerable. The socialists oppose it as a bourgeois device, and would like to argue that in a state where the bourgeoisie do not rule the Optimum is meaningless. The nationalists inflate the Optimum with their sentiment; in India, the Hindu and Muslim alike would fill it up with religious prejudices and mutual political jealousies to make it expand as far as it can. Their own desires concretise the fiction. Even Prof. Cannan seems to have sacrificed this condition in the interest of empiricism. He writes (*A Rev. Of Econ. Theory*, p 83) "Therefore, in conceiving the optimum population, we must....remember . .that the best is what is best in the long run, so that the best population for

any particular moment is that which is compatible with population taking the best possible line of development, whether that be increase or decrease, slow or rapid." In the paragraph after next, he writes, "In considering at any time the desirability in the interest of future mankind of increasing or decreasing population, we have to weigh on the one side the advantages which may be expected from the greater possibilities of gain from co-operation if people are more numerous against the advantages which may be expected from the greater relative plentifulness of land surface, natural forces and materials, and man-made material equipment, if people are less numerous." It is pertinent to observe that the 'best' of the first quotation is meant in the second quotation to be the most desirable, desirability itself being understood as comparative gain. The business of weighing and counting numerous advantages in the interest of such an ideal as co-operation (even when the relation between economic co-operation and increase in number is not being firmly specified) is a legitimate one, but the superlative then offers little help in arriving at a numerical estimate of the comparative. As the positive is easily susceptible to observation, an idea of the comparative can be more clearly derived from the actual economical situation than from any departure or derivation from the best. Probably, this is the price one has to pay for empiricism. Therefore, Prof. Robbins' warning is very timely. By the Optimum we can, in his opi-

nion, 'understand hypothetically the influence of numbers on population. It enables us to refute certain obvious popular errors. But we do it, and the Science of Economics grave disservice if we ask it to do more than this. if we call upon it to justify speciously quantitative results which will not bear the test of careful examination." (London Essays, 124). By careful examination is meant the logical.

(4) There should be no confusion between the Optimum and the maximum. It is neither equal to the maximum subsistence, nor the maximum standard of living, neither the maximum consumable goods per capita nor the maximum expectation of living. It is not connected directly with any of these. The connexion is indirect. *viz.*, through over and under population, any of which two conditions, may be obtained "long before there is any question of pressure on the means of subsistence or the level of longevity." "On the modern theory an area is over-populated when total returns per head are less than they would be if the population were a little smaller .. Theoretically it is possible to imagine a community all of whose members enjoy the standard of life of millionaires, which was yet over-populated in the economic sense. If the elimination of one millionaire would increase returns per head to the efforts of the others, over-population would be present. Similarly, a community of Methuselahs could still be over-populated. If the removal of one Methuselah would push up the expectation of life of one

individual, over-population would be posited. It is this particular situation, viz., more or less than what it would be if the population were plus or minus one only, that has to be stressed, and not the idea of maximum or minimum.

(5) The Optimum is not to be understood as an equilibrium point. Dr. R. K. Mukerji uses the term equilibrium in explanation of the Optimum. His approach is biological, in particular, ecological. A few words are needed to explain the quality of this approach. There is a certain methodological appropriateness in the ecological attempt at unfolding the meaning of the term Optimum. Biology is the science of growth, and Ecology deals with distribution and adjustment or symbiosis. The problems with which the study of population is concerned are also those of growth and distribution of numbers resulting in interactions with the environment, physical, organic and social. Besides, the physical continuity from the biological to the human merits serious consideration by the economist inasmuch as the former slips into the latter by a process of evolution which is not linear. In fine, the economics of population is a question of changing factors and changing functions. Such a question can hardly be tackled from the point of view adopted in the physical sciences. The method so far used has been statical, i. e., borrowed from 'the devices of physical statics'. That is to say, for the purpose of convenience, a certain factor is taken as the centre of focus of analysis, and the remaining ones



are excluded, then some other among the remaining ones is taken up to be analysed, the conclusion of the former being applied to or tested by that of the latter. In recent economic thought there is no unanimity of method, although equilibrium still remains the objective. As Prof. Robbins has pointed out, (*The Concept of Stationary Equilibrium*—*Ec. Jour.* June 1930), 'whereas in Clarke's method (*Distribution of Wealth*) the constancy of other factors is the condition of equilibrium by hypothesis, in the hands of Marshall it is one of the resultants of the equilibrating process of balancing opposites.' The difference seems to be that the former conceives of a static state, and the latter a static method. In my humble opinion, Prof. Pigou (*Eco. of St. States*) seeks to combine both the legacies and seems to have overcome Marshall's prejudice against the methods of physical statics. With Prof. Pigou the static condition is both a hypothesis and a method but a method that does not blind its user to the basic limitations of the hypothesis. He uses the word 'states' (not state), analyses three degrees of stationary states, and concludes that the economics of a stationary order would also 'comprise the process of transition from one stationary state to another'. It is to be pointed out, however, that the dynamic continuum is not posited in this volume. 'The essential note of transition is the existence of these disequilibria', which are created by a change in the governing conditions. The latter change

can be brought about either by the changed distribution of a factor among sub-factors, or by the quantity of a fundamental factor. The period needed is usually a long one. "Hence the economics of transition would play a large part even in the world where the governing conditions changed but rarely. In the actual world, they play a still larger part." The history of "the new stationary state" which ensues from a change in the governing factors "is not made up of periods of stationaries, to which the economics of stationary states is fully applicable, and periods of transition. Transition rules always, stationariness never; the long run never comes. It follows that the analysis worked out in this book cannot by itself make any large direct contribution to the study of real life. It provides a taking off place, but little more; a first stage only, which needs extensive supplement. The building is much more than the foundation. But, none the less to take pains over the foundation is not to waste time."

Now, I wonder how far this logical attitude will push Prof. Pigou towards Biology. In the case of Marshall, the knowledge of the limitations of static method was responsible for the following, shall I say? confession. Marshall writes, "There is a fairly close analogy between the earlier stage of economic reasoning and the devices of physical statics. But is there an equally serviceable analogy between the later stages of economic reasoning and the methods of physical

dynamics? I think not. I think that in the later stages of economics better analogies are to be got from Biology than from Physics. Of course, a new class of considerations.....may be introduced.....; and in the first handling of the new matter there may be a temporary reversion to physical analogies. But that will pass; and when the new matter is ready to be worked up with the old in an advanced stage, the method will become ever more remote from the physical and more akin to the biological" (Mem. p. 317). (A similar confession is wrung from Schumpeter who says that the words statics and dynamics as used by him are misnomers and so advises economists to drop the terms altogether). In any case, much new matter has been introduced into the study of population problems by Biology, e.g., food-requirements, differential birth and death rates, etc. The new matter requires biological approach, which is more than biological analogies. In other words, greater knowledge of factors relevant to the growth and distribution of population and their consequences breaks up the static hypothesis as well as the static method. If we do not choose to follow Schumpeter's counsel of despair we may accept Prof. Wolfe's concluding statement in the Ency. of Soc. Sc. "Dynamic population theory therefore merges into general dynamic economics and cannot be developed apart from consideration of economic structure and process as a whole and of the current speed and prospective amplitude of technical and economic change." This

dynamic economics offers the rationale of Dr. Mukerji's biological (ecological and symbiotic) approach, and explains his test of the Optimum as the highest average expectation of life. As expectation of life varies from age to age in the case of an individual and from each symbiotic equilibrium to another, it is obvious that his treatment of the problem is dynamic in the biological sense. He is really talking about the moving general equilibrium from which Keynes desires a move. (Keynes, *A Treatise on Money*, Vol. II, p. 406). Dr. Mukerji has profited by Marshall's suggestion, and his method is methodologically appropriate for his purpose. In this treatment we notice the 'biological tone'.

Now, this series of moving specific equilibria which goes to build up the moving general equilibrium is nothing more than a series or a set of equilibrating tendencies which cannot be logically conceived except without the help of the Optimum. For either the equilibrium comes from within the factors of the closed system, viz., the region, in two ways (a) as a balance of the factors only and (b) as a balance of factors on the one hand and the enclosing walls of the region, on the other, or it arises from outside the region. If it is the former, and I think Dr. Mukerji's treatment and admission is that the region is a natural division, then the Optimum is one equilibrium out of only a limited number of equilibria possible within the region, which equilibria are established or upset, ascend or descend according to the

degree of adjustment between the regional factors, i.e. to their respective relative strength. In which case, an optimum number is not an unattainable end, if only the statisticians help. This position is perfectly tenable if the region within which the ecological balance is taking place is a hypothetical one *ceteris paribus*. But Dr. Mukerji calls it natural, and modern Ecology seems to support him. Still somewhere there is an unresolved conflict between the method and the knowledge. In a relatively closed system, there must be a recognition of an "an inherent stationary equilibrium to which the system tends to return when disturbed." That is to say, a natural region should have a natural state of equilibrium. This is Mill's classical static economy re-entering by the back door. Dr. Mukerji's region is not mystical, as Wolfe charges, and yet being mainly geographical, it is too real to be related to the construct of the Optimum in any quantitative manner.

Dr. Mukerji is no doubt aware of the fact that regions act and react upon one another in real life. Modern culture traits, like age of marriage, size of the family, the social status of women, customs relating to confinement and such other factors as have an intimate bearing upon the problem, (Hiller, *A Culture Theory Of Popn. Trends*, Jour. of Pol. Ec. October 1930) are diffused, and no region is immune from the influence of another factor starting on its course from another region. Such a sociological fact has a great im-

portance today and demands that the natural state of equilibrium within a given actual region should be considered, not so much as a balance of forces inside or a balance of forces on the one hand and the region on the other, as in terms of another region outside. At a particular stage of enquiry the outside region should rather be considered as a frame of reference unconditioned by a still outer frame while it is modifying the factors inside the first region. Methodologically, there can be no objection to it apart from this that in the ever-widening circle we may lose touch with what is relevant and effective in the environment and thus sacrifice precision. Of course, precision can be made a fetish of. When precision is at the expense of knowledge one should not be squeamish. But will the content of the meaning of the Optimum be increased with the pushing back of frames of reference? If it is, then the entire system of inter-regional behaviour should be directly tackled and mention made of those features of regional economy which behave like the dynamic continuum of a changing system of economy. Then will the Optimum be understood as a series of moving equilibria or disequilibria. The increase of uncertainty is no argument against knowledge; here it is only the fallacy of composition. This portion of the analysis has probably not yet been completed by Dr. Mukerji. But on its completion will depend the rigour of his biological method and his faith in Economic Biology. If Dr. Mukerji thinks only of

an actual region and confines his analysis within its limits, his optimum or equilibrium may be measured, but he will not then move to what Marshall calls the Mecca of the Economists (p. 318, *Memoirs*), viz., Economic Biology. His present position looks like the 'temporary reversion to physical analogies' after the introduction of the new matter (in his case physical dynamics), which Marshall prophesied would come and pass. The logical conclusion of Dynamic Economics is Biological Economics. As for myself, I am not frightened by the possible failure of quantitative measurement so long as a clearer understanding of all the relevant forces including a logical conception thereof is gained.

The above remarks should mean that equilibrium points of states in connexion with the Optimum are not to be understood as factual situations. The realities, which fictions are not, centre in the disequilibria of constant transition. The concept of moving equilibria is no doubt an improvement upon the concept of static equilibrium, but 'constructional' it remains in so far as movement is in terms of the Optimum. And yet, the equilibrating tendency is clearly conceived with the help of such a construct.

## *The Concept of Social Force*

Sociology first borrowed the term "Social Force" from the Physics of the Nineteenth Century. But logicians of the scientific method no longer believe in Force as a reality. The superficial analogies to laws of Physics, as given by Solvay or Carver, "disfigure and misinterpret not only the social phenomena but the laws of physics, mechanics, energetics, and logic as well." In the treatment of social phenomena, there is no unit of measurement; facts which can be isolated are few in number; their arrangement is not impersonal and unprejudiced; the behaviour of individuals in groups is not exactly repetitive; and quantitative measurement is not possible as in Physics. Incomputable forces do not help the formation of any scientific system, which modern Sociology aspires to be.

The usual description of historical tendencies as Social Forces is vitiated, among others, by the assumption that the temporal sequence of events is compelling from the nature of an inner development. This idea of time as a compelling force is neither psychological nor logical. The study of institutions as Social Forces becomes equally illogical in so far as they are supposed, sooner or later, to be the physical reincarnations of some Force or the other.

Even when the study of Sociology is thus



vitiated, Psychology may yet tell us that there is Social Force, judging from the persistence or perseveration of any mental trait, the amount of resistance and opposition it meets or evokes, the work it can do in the matter of cohesion and impulsion, and in the effecting of certain momentous changes as noticed in the differences between the mentality of primitive races and children, on the one hand, and civilised beings and adults, on the other. Ward realised the importance of the contribution of Psychology to Sociology and postulated that the Social Forces must be lodged in the individual. The majority of American Sociologists have followed his lead and taken the *individual living in society* as the human nucleus of the concept. As this is a more sensible view than that of group theorists, we come to the facts of persistence or perseverance of mental traits, the organic memory of psychological events, the direction and co-ordination of the behaviours of individuals living in association with one another, as the contents of Social Forces.

If we classify mental events, (which are not similar to physical events at all points) we find that in the primary forms of incorporation through sensations (fusionary, ligatory or interpenetrative†), the central nervous system is increasingly assuming the role of the hero of the piece. When physico-chemical stimuli are supposed to be solely

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† The terms are from Dr. Bentley's *The Field of Psychology*. I have closely followed the argument of this excellent book.

responsible for the incorporation of mental events. we cut out their mode, intensity, extent and temporal course for the sake of convenience. All these features of the so-called objective stimuli are responsible for the degree of organisation and its reference. The tendinous strain noticed in the primary organisation of experience through sensations becomes more prominent in the type of organisation through affects. The role of affects in the incorporation of experience is not easy to detect, but there is enough evidence to show that their presence adds to or detracts from, or otherwise fundamentally changes, the nature of experience. They may be said to *suffuse* the entire incorporation, and create values. The next type of organisation is by images. The stimuli recede in the background, the affects persist, but the importance of the central initiative and control becomes greater. Even in the most elementary form of pattern-weaving, 'the kinaesthetic factor involved in the tendinous pull is to a great extent dependent on central initiative and control'. The tendinous pull is not to be understood in terms of mechanical physiology as an arithmetical summation of the residues of bodily movements. In the secondary incorporations, it is only natural that the contribution of the centre is greater and more manifest through willing, memorial train, purpose and meaning. The secondary incorporations are real incorporations, but they are removed from the simple stimulus-response correspondence. They do not, however, cease to be potent for this

removal. The difference is in the matter of references. As distinguished from the particular reference denoting an object, 'the total image may serve as the stage for memorial, imaginal and referential processes.' (It is not experimentally clear how far this totality can be equated to a self-regulating principle of movement). In other words, the secondary incorporations are charged with meaning. Images may be formed into a constellation, a ligation or a unity. When images are mixed with sensations, a mixed type of organisation is formed, different from the first in the matter of a larger contribution of the brain, and from the second, in so far as it does not depend immediately on the fulfilment of certain conditions in the cortex. This newness of integration, except in the case of abstract thinking, is not really novel; it may only be a revival or manifestation of antecedent functional residues. On analysis, the conditions of this third type of organisation are found to be those of the primary type, eg, the quality of repetition, time-interval, reference, and such immediate incentives to re-organisation as the general temper of the organism, etc. The immediate incentives may be ordinary physical stimuli, but they are always fused with the functional residues of the brain present in thinking, imagination, comprehension, etc. in order that the mixed type of incorporation may be formed. The external stimuli are 'no substitutes for the sensory ones' located in the central nervous system, as the Behaviourists in their pre-occupations are

apt to suppose. The older school of Psychologists had also laid great stress on such brain incentives as memory, imagination, thinking, and habit. But in the light of experimental psychology, we have to reject the notions of their being so many states of mind. If they are so many functionings, then physically, they leave certain residues in the central nervous system, which when very strong are apt to leave the brain comparatively free of outside physical stimuli, and which then, psychologically, help to organise and integrate experience by lending them meaning and general reference. The new law of association, as framed by Dr. Bentley on the basis of experimental observations, is possibly very near the truth. Although we know but little of the functions of the brain, we do have plenty of evidence that a total neural function leaves behind a total disposition or trend which once it is renewed tends to complete itself in the old way. To be sure, time, conflict and confusion are constantly setting a term to this complete renewal, but the tendency towards it is, apparently, what we discover in our associative and determining tendencies and in our topical and habitational trends. On the reference side of mental processes, Ach finds an anticipation of coming stimulus corresponding to the determining tendency on the physical side. Muller rejects the idea of anticipation and formulates a directive idea, an idea of a goal working on a mental disposition. This important goal-idea "commands attention, it possesses interest

and interest serves to lend it a stronger perseveration and a greater associative effectiveness." We however fail to detect either the physical background of such tendencies, or when it is detectable, we do not agree with the complete psycho-physical parallelism involved in such explanations. They are mysterious tendencies, but they certainly emphasise the importance of the reference side of the brain's activity. The predicament, as in emotions, the meaning-series, as in perceptions, the topic and the novel-problem, as in comprehension and thinking, all assemble relevant experiences in certain groups; and when the groups are in direct line with the functional trends, the organisation becomes comparatively stable. The relative stability is responsible for the resistance to opposition involved in the notion of force. The affective trends, the cortical residues and the referential series tend to directivity.

✓ In other words, if the Science of Human Society is to draw from Psychology, we cannot postulate the concept of Social Force in any way other than indicated above. The conclusion is that if the term 'Force' is to be used at all in the study of human behaviours, it is to be used neither as a series of stimuli nor as a series of responses, but in the sense of dynamic relationships between them, which relationships are directed by the predisposition of the responding organisation, the affective trends and the meaning or reference of the organised experience. There is a kind of unifor-

mity in the physiological process, (if not in the logical one), though it does not lend to an identity or a close psycho-physical parallelism. The affective tendencies, the tendinous pulls and other physiological trends are important co-ordinating and directing agencies. The role of affective trends is present even in thinking processes and judgments of value. What the reflex does for a short time in a particular way by particular mechanisms, the affective tendencies do for a much longer time in a more generalised yet a stabler way through the association areas of the brain. 'The brain is the seat of all trends'\* Memory or retention, the totality of the situation of present experience, the affective tendencies, and the organic state, all favour or oppose movement along habitual tracts. Heredity, therefore, plays an important part. If all these favour movement along certain neural tracts, the responses become automatic. This is how the spontaneity of a Social Force is to be appreciated. It not only means expenditure of energy but its pre-severation and organisation to oppose new forces, tendencies, interests, institutions, etc. So the factorial description of Social Force includes (1) preservation, (2) affective dispositions and trends working on many types of associative incorporations, (3) the meaning side of the latter, and (4) the interplay of all the above factors.

An orthodox Sociologist would hold that the

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\*Pieron-Thought and the Brain,

role of Society in the make-up of those factors is very important, and therefore, the concept of Social Force is logically tenable. Thus, in the first place, it may be held that in so far as social life is the psychological environment of the individual, it influences the cortical activities of the individual. But there is a deplorable lack of physiological evidence to prove any corresponding changes in the cortical structure of the individual since the beginning of social life. If physiological evidences are to be trusted, it may be said that such changes should have set the stage of social life. It is clear, on the other hand, that the social environment must pass through the brain in some form in order that it may produce a momentum. And it is the environment that has changed. The brain remaining what it is, no wonder that the affective trends remain what they were, which possibly accounts for the persistence of so many of Prof. Small's interests, McDougall's instincts and sentiments, Holt and Thomas's wishes, Fouillee's ideas, Park's attitudes, or Pareto's residues. Secondly, it may be held that as there have been important changes in the nature of social life, social affects and sentiments, clear as they are in the fundamental differences in the mentality of the primitive and the civilised man, 'a proper understanding of the social changes would prove the necessity of formulating the concept of Social Force. But we know that Prof. Levy-Bruhl's theory of primitive pre-logicality is untenable in the light of new facts collected by

Rivers and Malinowsky. Levy-Bruhl's law of contradiction is a generalisation from an imperfect understanding of the connotations of certain words. (Thus the word 'Toa' does not signify only the dead, but the dying and the living old as well). Similarly, his law of participation, by which the part acquires the property of the whole by mere participation, is not a generalisation only suited to the supposed pre-logical state of mind, but is also perfectly applicable to many attitudes characteristic of modern civilised life.

Another argument for the logicity of the concept of Social Force may be advanced by those who believe that what is true of the biological world is also true of the social world. They may take their stand on Piaget's findings of the child's world and language and point out that human beings in their childhood have no sense of significant relationship existing between ideas and ideas or things and things (law of syncretism), that they are apt to generalise from one example (law of transduction), but that later on they develop the sense of intricate relationship and become careful about generalisation from one particular only through living in association. Therefore, it may be concluded that as Society forces this change, there is Social Force. If we analyse this argument, (as Victoria Hazlitt has done in the British Journal of Psychology, April, 1930), we will find that the alogicality of the child (who is supposed to correspond to the man of the pre-social stage) is an exaggeration



arising from 'the over-valuation of the verbal expression as a measure of thinking, and from an exaggerated view of the logicity of adult thought.' It may as well be that Prof. Piaget did commit the same mistakes as Prof. Levy-Bruhl committed in trying to fix a large number of ideas with different shades in one term of common parlance. It may also be that the child's ego-centricity is a remnant of the bad training of parents and nurses. Besides, an adult too is very often childish in Prof. Piaget's sense. If Prof. Burt's statement that there is 'no evidence of any specific process of thought that could not be performed by a child of seven' is true, then the main structure of the last argument falls to the ground.

Therefore, as I have written elsewhere,\* "There is no necessity for postulating the concept of 'Social' Force even from the psychological point of view i.e. even when psychological changes undergone by an individual are prominent and ordinarily traceable to Society. But the individual is always living in association with other individuals, and as such he has been studied. Thus the social factor may be said to be already involved in each term, in each factor, and in each activity of the cortex. The word 'social' in the term: Social Force does not mean a new factor which disturbs the analysis. The discussion does not mean that social interests, social sentiments and attitudes are not to be treated as

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\*Basic Concepts of Sociology Ch. III, of which this essay is a re-statement.

facts. They are facts to be recognised by the social Engineer, but for the theoretical Sociologist, they are facts which go to make up the different factors in the movement initiated by the cortex." Meanwhile Social Force remains a shorthand term.

*A Few Principles  
of  
Post-War Reconstruction of India & Regionalism*

It was reported some time ago that the U. P. Government had separated the Price Control Department from the Bureau of Statistics and Economic Intelligence, handing over the former to Supplies and tacking to the latter, now called a Department, the work of vetting schemes of post-war re-construction. If the Bureau had not been like the shuttlecock between a number of ill-strung battle-doors on a windy day, it could have performed by itself all those duties. But probably, the work has increased beyond what an optimal administrative unit can bear, and reconstruction after the War is more than a handful. In this article I propose to discuss a few basic principles involved in the actual administrative work of any reconstruction-department that has been or may be set up in the near future. If I take up administrative attitudes first, it is because of my conviction that they are seminal to the success of a national scheme. In the absence of proper attitudes, fool-proof programmes, even under the best of auspices, come to grief in no time.

The basis of any administrative attitude towards post-war reconstruction is the prospect of India's status after the war. We are told that the Cripps offer stands. Which means that India will have the right to secede. Let us accept for the

time being the bonafide of this British Cabinet in fixing the outer limit of India's self-government and hope that the next Cabinet will not go back. Still, the limit is a political limit, and *not* an economic limit. It may appear to be a contradiction in terms, but those who believe more in the logic of events than in the hypothetical equation of political troth to economic realities will at once see my point. India may or may not secede politically; but she is not likely to secede economically. And for two reasons: (1) Great Britain, after the war, will lean more heavily upon India than now for absorption of heavy industrial goods. Africa is not ripe for heavy machinery; China and the Far East will have the U. S. A. as a competitor; Russia will train all her armamemt factories to a fourth five Years' plan. And if the Continent goes Socialist after Hitler cracks, its existing industrial organisation will be more or less sufficient unto itself. The Balkans are surely to come under the Soviet zone. I do not suggest that these avenues of British trade-expansion will be closed tight. British export will reach China, Far East, Russia and Continental Europe all right, but in relatively small proportions, as compared either, with the British Indian trade or the British-European trade of the mid-nineties. The Dominions, and South America too, are likely to have less share of the British exports. The former will partially satisfy their own needs, and the latter will come still more under the orbit of American export. Therefore, India alone remains

free to be bound by economic links forged in Birmingham and Hull. British import and entrepot trade once determined British policy; now British exports will. India will not be allowed to secede economically.

(2) On the other hand, Indian businessmen will find it more profitable to be bound. With Germany and Japan *hors de combat*, and with a chastened mood of the Indian Chambers of Commerce, the post-war Indian capitalist is likely to behave like Barkis, *pace* his pronounced nationalism. Besides, it is quite on the cards that Great Britain, the U.S.A. and Canada may form a huge Anglo-Saxon trust in steel and iron and proceed on the usual basis of regional and horizontal division, leaving India to her older acquaintance. No amount of direct contact between India and the U.S.A. in regard to Lend and Lease or other types of operations is likely to affect that superior disposition. American capitalism is a danger, so is British capitalism; but a greater danger, is a gentlemen's agreement between the three. So from all sides the forces will press to prevent post-war 'free' India from being economically free, despite all protestations to the contrary.

It is certain that the present reconstruction departments will build on this certitude. They will not forget that at least for ten years after the war India will have to absorb British export in heavy secondary goods, machinery and the like, both unwillingly and

willingly, of course, as soon as the U.K. can afford to take them off from their more urgent domestic needs. In other words, all reconstruction work by government department today will exclude the stimulation of native heavy machinery from its short-range planning. The corollary will be to concentrate on machine-tools. If the demand for setting up Indian heavy industry comes earlier, it can be satisfied only by a juxtaposition of high considerations, which obviously are outside the purview of a mere department in India. Besides, it can always be argued that small tools and the like are a necessary condition precedent to the secondary industrial revolution.

There is another basis of the present governing attitudes towards post-war reconstruction; it is the picture of the future type of industrial organisation. In drawing its outline I am not drawing upon my subconscious. The ruling type of organisation in India will work on the British model. That model is sure to be on the line of public or semi-public corporations or trusts, a sort of 'managerial democracy' cross-bred with technocracy, and all that it means in the way of rationalisation and rule of the experts. Government supervision will make it appear socialistic, 'but 'M' lord, everybody is not so wise as His Lordship .....looks.' To put it bluntly, the German type of industrial organisation has every chance of ruling the Anglo-Saxon economy after Hitlerism is smashed by the Anglo-Saxon might. Unless, of course, the British people take care from now.

But they are not taking care. So the release of a large body of technicians, particularly of the Air Services, after the war will force technocracy upon every belligerent country including Great Britain where the memory of unpreparedness in the first eighteen months of the War is sure to act as an additional fillip. Technocracy is not well-disposed towards socialism. Its cult of the strong silent man is the opposite of the cult of the mass. The American example also will strengthen these social forces in Great Britain. They will have the strongest repercussions on Indian economy, with due regard to the usual lag. I do not suggest that in India we are going to have any socialist organisation. Nothing like it, unless the further extension of Defence of India Act's provisions to prevent strikes in essential industries in the name of close collaboration of Capital and Labour or of Labour's natural harmony of interests with Capital as trustee a la Gandhian plan is called Socialism. Whatever may be said about the present co-operation between the Government, Industries and Labour under the duress of war, one is sure that it is going to continue in some shape or the other under the pressure of Indian capitalistic interests after the war, irrespective of the quality of the National Government. Neither the Congress nor the League, jointly or severally, will have the power to override the interests of Indian Capitalism. Neither the Soviet nor the influence of the Communists will be able to check them. All that may happen is some increase in

rationalisation in business and productive methods with the help of British and American experts and Indian managers. This the government knows better than most of us. Thus it is that reconstruction departments are busy with the recruitment of the technical and the managerial staff. The immediate criticism is against the importation of English experts. (Later on, these will be the demobilised personnel). But the genuine charge is against the blocking of the path to any authentic planning by a popular government on Socialist principles. To sum up: the blue print of post-war economic reconstruction in India by government departments is going to emphasise the possibilities of small tools and machinery, keep sufficient room for English managers and technicians, and stop all chances of Socialism, with the tacit consent of India's vested interests. If the National Planning Commission were there, a different story could have been unfolded with the help of popular governments.

The next point relates to the government's programme, the stress being on the firmness of the features rather than on the adequacy of the programme. This may appear to be obvious, but in reality it is not so. It should be clear by now that in India governments decide only the policy and leave the programme to grow out of the brains and the knowledge of precedents of the trusted staff. Bureaucracies cannot but work in that way. The subordinate staff would occasionally put forward a scheme, but the cleverness of the superior



cadre consists in driving a coach and four through it. If any programme survives this ordeal, it becomes attenuated by the mere process of time. But marks remain, as do those of an Indian mother after a dozen child-births as reminiscences of erstwhile endeavours. Up till now, nothing but pious expressions of the desire to set up Reconstruction Committees have come out of responsible lips. Thus only the faint outline of a Food-Policy has struggled to appear on the horizon when, on the other hand, one of the worst situations in food is staring us in the face. A Food portfolio has been created in the centre, but its connection with the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research, a body that should know about reconstruction on the strength of years of patient work, is not known. India has been divided between surplus and deficit provinces, an Advisory Council has been appointed, only one meeting of which has been held so far, and it is again 'expected' that provinces will co-operate. Meanwhile, two provincial governments, for reasons of their own, but not sufficiently publicised to allay anxiety, have not controlled wheat in spite of the Central Government's wishes. This certainly is not much of a programme, but only a highly generalised, almost a rarefied wish devout, a romantic adolescent aspiration for something to be done somehow. I think, the public deserves better than all that.

What has gone above is no indulgence in prophesying. The present government is at best

an administration, and knowing its attitudes and capabilities, one cannot be hopeful of the result of its re-constructive labour. India is in for a period of untold misery. Nobody knows when the War will end and popular government come, or when they come how exactly they will liquidate this legacy and allow the democratic forces to control this mischievous prospective combination of Imperialist and Capitalist interests, this alliance between bureaucratic and technocratic tendencies. But come they will, and then their work of reconstruction will have to be pursued on other lines. All round industrial expansion without 'managerial revolution'—that will be the correct principle, in my opinion. Machine-tools and foreign experts will not suffice.

The capital need of a governmental programme for reconstruction is a firm outline of a federal policy. No provincial or Indian State government can be allowed to offend against the interests of the whole. We have seen the disastrous consequences of keeping the provincial and the Indian State units apart in the matter of sugar and wheat control. So far as the provincial governments are concerned, their independent action may be considered as administrative 'mala prohibita.' The Indian States are a more difficult proposition. The usual remedy is to have elected representatives in the central body. But our experience of such 'representative central' organisations is not fortunate. They have failed mainly because of their mass and their unrelatedness to the local

needs. Therefore, the best thing is to have regional blocks of these states operating by regional committees, each committee sending one or two members to the neighbouring provincial committees. The regional blocks are then to act like electoral colleges to the Central Inter-regional Committee whose decisions will be binding upon all concerned. Only rule-making powers will be left to the regional organisations. In this way the federal unitariness of the general policy may be guaranteed. What is to be avoided is the fissiparous tendency of the parts, even if they are eventually brought together in a 'con'-federation of economic action. Economic Federation is the only policy conceivable in the Indian context. Once that is accepted local adjustment may be easily made. The days of self-sufficient economic units are over.

A word of caution is needed. The Central Government is sometimes oblivious of local facts and urgencies. For example, it is quite possible that Delhi, which, even if far away, is fascinated by the holy name of Benares and calculates on the Benares prices of foodstuffs whereas the U. P. price-level may be largely regulated by that of Hapur. It may as well be that Simla, which houses the summer quarters of the Punjab, is more mindful of the needs of the Punjab than those of Bombay, Madras, or the U. P. The Punjab is the sword-arm; it is often the loudest voice too. Such partialities need not always be deliberate. At the same time, these cases only

prove the need of a strong organisation at the centre capable of fixing the preferences and of arbitrating competing claims.

A priority-scheme is the heart of planning; and a schedule of allocation and contribution is the next requisite; and the third is regional location; so do the planners in certain independent countries say. India's economic and political uncertainties demand a modification of these principles. Instead of 'priority' between different types of goods, heavy and light, producers' and consumers', and so on, India had better build up a scale of 'preference'. British interests cannot but come on the top of the scale; because (1) that economic complex which gathers round the two price-levels of Great Britain and India with the statutory exchange-ratio at 1 s. 6 d. as the axis is likely to be stronger than the pledge of self-government; and (2) the low rate of interest, so ably maintained by the Government in Great Britain and India, will very probably give more fillip to British export seeking the Indian market in greater quantity after the War than to the Indian export of manufactures to Great Britain or to other partners in Mr. Lionel Curtis' Commonwealth. Preference scale is national planning with the teeth taken out. India certainly cannot go in for retaliatory tariff.

This scale should have one column for countries in the Middle East, Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, East Africa, another for Burma, Malaya and other zones less industrialised than India, and a third for

the units in India. Spade work in post-war reconstruction has already been done by the Eastern Group Council, and the files may be recovered from the Delhi Secretariat basements to prepare the first column. There is, however, one point in this disinterment which is relevant; Western India and its hinterland are the Indian units that will profit by it, Eastern India and its hinterland will have to be satisfied with the supply of labour and of jute, tea, groundnut, mica, and the like. In other words, an Economic Vindhya range may be thrown up dividing India, this time between the East and the West. It need not frighten the Hindus who are used to four faces and more in their gods, but what will be the reaction upon those who want Pakistan, I wonder! Be that as it may, the first principle of preference is that of the Middle East versus the Far East, and the second principle is to so arrange the federating units of India that the demands from both the directions may be met by Indian industrial and merchant capital. So any provincial Reconstruction Department like that of U. P., will have to choose from now to whose hinterland it will belong, Bombay's or Bengal's. The U. P. war-industry, however, is now producing more than ninety per cent of the army tents and boots, I am told. Which province uses them most can be guessed.

The second schedule of preference for the central government will primarily be concerned with the relation between the constituent units.

I have used the words 'constituent units' for special reasons. It is obvious that if India is to behave like an economic whole the units will have to occasionally perform the duties of agents to the Federal authority. Thus while it is thinkable that the centre will purchase by its own staff at Delhi the surplus produce of one unit to meet the deficit of another, it is undesirable that the distribution should be undertaken by anybody but the men in local centres. So far as one can see, a better arrangement will be the establishment of the nucleus of the Federal service at every headquarters of the unit. This practice is not new in the world. Side by side with the regional committees, the regional federal organisations should function to bridge the gulf between advice and action no less than to secure the constant 'convection' or flow between the particular and the general, which is the soul of Federation.

In the previous paragraphs I have used the word 'unit' instead of province or Indian State. Apart from the fundamental consideration that I am envisaging a Federal Economic Structure in opposition to a loose 'confederation' of Pakistan, Dravidistan etc., my purpose is to bring the conception of the region into the working order of post-war reconstruction. Recently, however, the word 'region' is being bandied about a great deal, but it has created more confusion than clarity. For example, the Andhra movement or the Pakistan movement is based on the 'regional'

homogeneity of certain areas. Here 'region' is partly a geographical entity and partly a cultural or linguistic one. But not one of such 'regions' is economically self-sufficient. Rather, each is parasitical. To put it in the sociological language, each is a 'depressed area,' with this difference that while Poplar is a consequence of London capitalism in real estate, Pakistan at present is a counsel of despair, and the Andhra cry chiefly one of wounded vanity. Other 'regions' are purely geographical.

What I want to convey by 'region' is certain 'geo-economic' facts and principles. I crave pardon for using this new term, but it is the only counter to the geo-politics that both the India Government and the Muslim League have borrowed, without knowing it I am sure, from one of the spiritual masters of Hitler. Besides, 'Economic Geography' is too static, too descriptive a system to suit the dynamic purposes of construction. And then, a merely geographical 'region' leads to 'regionalism', which only transfers the evils of provincialism to another sphere or reshuffles these evils in a manner that cuts across established administrative frontiers. What we want for post-war India is a number of economic regions, each for its own needs, acting like a reservoir of the economic forces of productivity, each a tributary to the common stream, and each, by virtue of its contribution, the possessor of the title to profit by what is common. In other words, a region is a unit of productive

energy, and the inter-regional pattern is a current of inter-dependent conduct.

Probably, all this may appear to be meta-physical to the administrator or the economist in India. But I mean something very concrete, even through my language may be defective. It is not the place to develop all my ideas of Geo-Economics, but a few may be very briefly mentioned at once.

(A) A geo-economic region is firstly a statistical arrangement by indices of the contribution of various crops and different commodities to the total productivity. The important thing to remember is not so much the variety of the crops and the goods as the choice between them. Once that is known, it is not outside the competence of human ingenuity to construct the index number of the yield or productivity of one item in order that its place in and its contribution to the total productive resources of the region may be determined. The matter of 'weighting' must of course be in the hands of the Inter-regional Committee.

(B) The boundary of the region is not so much a function of the nearness to materials or of the availability of a plentiful supply of local labour as it is of three sets of other factors, viz. the area and the rate of power-service, the comparative freight-rates of transport services, and the intensity of the quasi-monopoly of any specialised good. They re-act upon each other.

(C) The geo-economic region has its stability



assured by the triangle of place, folk and work, and its dynamics secured mainly by fuller employment of the region's resources, including labour.

(D) Inter-regional balance is a matter of the scale of preferences in the hands of the central body. If the word 'allocation' is preferred, it may be used provided that it does not shut out thinking along independent lines.

How to proceed with the manipulation of the above considerations? Personally, I do not see any difficulty beyond the administration's ingrained mistrust of knowledge, which is always deeper than the mere lack of will. But that question can be by-passed, for the time being.

A is the duty of the statistical organisation of the Central body in intimate connection with the regional bureaus of Statistics and Economic Intelligence. I am not sure how far Prof. Gregory, the present Economic Adviser, can organise it in the way suggested here in view of his avowed lack of faith in planning. Indian economists also are much too tied up with Marshall's margins to be of any high use. Indian statisticians are blissfully ignorant of Economics. And all avoid contact with Sociology and the study of the social forces. So we will have to import a few men from Soviet Russia or the U. S. A. God save India from the London School of Economics and Cambridge! If a Russian is not allowed in Delhi after the War, a young

American (no more Canadian!) may do duty. Be that as it may, the indices can be prepared and the region can be statistically defined, if the net-work of Statistical and Economic Bureaus, which an honest scheme of Reconstruction definitely demands, is set to do the work without let or hindrance, and with some guidance.

B posits a survey of power-resources, for which a commission is the first need. If it is possible, the Hydel-area has to be demarcated from the plant-electricity area. We in the U. P. are better placed in this regard, though I wish I could say that about the freight-rates. Of all the factors that have led to the ousting of the U. P. wheat from the port and market of Calcutta, the preferential freight-rate which the Punjab wheat enjoys is a major one. Similarly with the Bombay market for Bengal's coal. In the case of coal, however, high reasons of State intervene, I mean the pull of British Steamship companies in the transport of coal from outside India. Still, if the inland freight policy is fixed by the inter-regional body, a geo-economic region may over-ride such purely 'economic' considerations that divide the rates. Other such purely 'political' considerations as the maintenance of Sind, the N. W. F. P. and Orissa, and also the vast amount of provincial mal-adjustment, which is the direct consequence of the administrative gerrymandering that Lord Curzon initiated and later statesmen, both British and Indian, have equated with statesmanship, may also shed their

urgencies in the context of inter-regional dependence.

C posits a course of study in modern Sociology. Nobody on earth can guarantee that men in power will ever go through it. But a lift may be promised if they do.

D has been touched in a previous paragraph.

The quasi-monopoly of certain goods referred to above is a tough proposition. But we know how it has been broken by modern capitalists. Economists are aware of the theoretical basis of imperfect competition in so far as it is occasioned by the economics of monopoly. The disparity in freight is one of its fruitful sources. In fact, even monopoly in retail-trade is possible on the strength of the varying costs of transport. Big Business however meets the threat of competition in monopoly by all kinds of discrimination. The world knows the story of rubber in the Malaya, and no Indian can be enamoured of the methods employed there to beat down a rival. We can therefore only think of price-fixation, the subsidy of substitutes, and the threat of legislative action by the Central organisation.

To summarise: My study of the social forces unleashed by the course of this war does not permit me to think of post-war reconstruction in terms of an autarchic, 'free' India. Nor is there much prospect of any genuine socialist planning in the hands of the national government that will follow.

What is likely to ensue is the protective colouration of a Capitalism, the masquerade of socia-

listic economy, with power in the hands of managers, technicians and bureaucrats; in other words, techno-bureaucracy. Still, if the laws of dialectics have a meaning, other forces, and deeper ones than those working on political or administrative levels, will press for the unity of a federal economic structure on the basis of geoeconomic regions bound together by an overriding and adjusting inter-regional authority at the centre elected by the regional colleges. I am fully aware of the limitations of this sketch. But it can offer some ground for discussion, which after all is all that we intellectuals have been told to do, and also are fit for and have time for doing. If anybody thinks that it is a gloomy picture, I shall agree. But this land of ours is not a self-generator of social forces; it can only be their victim. Meanwhile, let the joy of planning remain unconfined.

## *The Political Economy of the War*

The time has not come to measure the total effect of the War upon India's economy. One view, which has been assiduously cultivated by official propaganda, is that India has materially prospered by the War. The proofs advanced are the huge sterling balances, the mounting savings and deposits, the growth of industries, the accumulation of profit as revealed in the normal and the excess items of Income-Tax returns, the higher wages of industrial labourers and the higher income of agriculturists resulting in the lighter burden of indebtedness, and above all, the general atmosphere of expanding economy enveloping the country. Behind these 'evidences' of progress in substance lurks the argument—in fact, they are held by it—that if India had not had the benefit of the British connection there would have been no improvement upon India's economic status and function as the colonial supplier of raw materials. Thus the facts and figures supplied by the Government so far are directed towards the conclusion that the economic destiny of India is wedded to India's political destiny in dis severable bonds.

The other view, which is widely shared by honest, professional economists, businessmen and the large public of consumers, is contrary to the above. Being not in possession of knowledge to

question the accuracy of the official figures, most Indians are in serious doubt about the representative character of the hand-picked facts, the validity of the argument as well as the assumptions. They are also nervous about the implications. In their 'considered' opinion, the declared material prosperity of India is a distorted version of the true situation presented before the world to justify the British rule. The genuine picture is very gloomy, they are convinced. Deception, they feel, can be practised upon people who can be or are willing to be deceived, but it can no longer be tried upon those the scales of whose eyes have been brusquely removed by the sight of three millions of human beings struck by the man-made famine. Skeletons, Indians humbly admit, have been the most important product of war-industry and the macabre dance of death the only enjoyment for India during the War.

There is an intermediate position between these two views. It is generally occupied by civil servants, profiteers and a few 'disinterested observers'. For them, the economic effect of the war is like the curate's egg, good in parts. Boiled down, their arguments, not the egg, come to this; let us seize this opportunity and make the most of it. It would be an understandable position if only it could be proved that the opportunity was more than personal, i.e. national, and that it could be utilised under the existing political dispensation, i.e., the stranglehold of British domination, sec. 93 provincial governments, and an irresponsible centre

working at the instance of Whitehall. The inherent weakness of the intermediate position consists in the contradiction between 'disinterested observation' and 'interested policy.' It is sought to be covered by the virtues of realistic approach and detachment. But some people think that realism can be distinguished from opportunism and detachment from inaction by the acid test of the nation's good. That test is seldom applied. Therefore, there can be no sensible midway between official propaganda and public experience.

Let us take the accrual of sterling balances. We will not refer to the admitted cheapness of the transactions or the alternative methods by which the supply from India could have been financed. We are interested in the nature of the accrual, its origin, process and future. The bulk of the balances is not immediately relevant. What is relevant is India's hold on them. And on that there can be no two opinions. India *had* to supply, because India was dragged into the war without consent; India *had* to supply at a rate lower than what British businessmen were demanding and getting from their own government at war; India *cannot* utilise the balances, pooled and blocked as they are, for India's benefit; India has been *asked* to scale down the balances when Indian industry and agriculture are starving for lack of machinery; India has been *asked* to wait for payment in capital goods while India is being flooded with articles of luxury the bill for which is likely to reduce the balances and the product-

ion of which could be easily undertaken in India; and then India is being *pressed* to remain within the sterling bloc without a guarantee that there will be no manipulation of the exchange-rate. All this brood of reasons spring from the one original sin of a reason *viz.*, that India is politically subject.

The process involved inflation and shortage of goods. Much ink was spilt two years ago about the causes of high prices. Some blamed the financing of supply, and others the lowering of production. Common sense, however, pointed to the fact that both went together as Siamese twins. In Great Britain, the price-level and the cost of living indices were kept within very reasonable bounds throughout the war; whereas in India, the reckless purchases of the governments who thus entered directly, and indirectly through the U. K. C. C., into competition with the consuming public simultaneously created the shortage of consumers' goods and pushed up the prices to giddy heights. Transport difficulties were trotted out, but the denial policy was not formulated by the boatmen of the Padma; nor was the shortage of engines and wagons, caused by export to the near East when the facilities for their production were not present and the demand for them had been repeatedly turned down, fostered by the Indians themselves. Inflation created shortage and shortage created further inflation, whatever might have been the causes of each in isolation. This economic conspiracy is



explicable only in terms of India's political subjection. The problems arising out of the non-payment of sterling-balances, essentially, are not problems of business. If they were so, there would have been interest and the creditors, the Reserve Bank of India, would have had a voice.

The implications of the sterling balances depend upon the terms and the period of payment. One and only one principle governs the terms; it is the interest of India's industrial expansion. If for some time to come the U. K. cannot pay in capital goods, then in India's interest India must be allowed to bank on that credit to purchase them elsewhere. Unfortunately, the non-release of dollar exchange cuts across the principle. This fact is not so innocent as it looks. The U.K. will pay, no doubt, but at which price and in which quality? Now, international prices can be manipulated by exchange. Great Britain's stand in the International Monetary Conferences has been for more elasticity in currency-management. If, therefore, the sterling-rupee ratio be managed in such a way that India gets much less in terms of real goods than what she is entitled to at present, then the value of sterling balances goes down. To look at the problem from another angle, if the British prices of capital goods are kept up in any other way, or the same price is charged for reconditioned plants for India as for new plants, the same result will ensue. So the time of payment in goods is very important. Payment in British goods when the savings and

deposits are dis-invested without India's being able to absorb them through Indian goods is against India's interests. Payment on the eve of industrial expansion means lower profit for Indian industries, a thing that would not be bad by itself if it did not involve the less earning capacity of Indian capital and the greater occasion for foreign investment, and also if it did not imply wage-cuts and restrictionist economy. Payment after India is on her legs is a charity that can be dispensed with. So the implications of the huge amount of India's credit hinge upon the time of repayment. This element of time is not merely an economic instrument. It is political, because it is tuned to the Whitehall clock that is wound by British economic interests. Measured in terms of India's low standards of living and production that cannot be raised mainly because of the blocked sterling resources, the problem is economic. On the British side, the sheer inability to repay is also economic. But the two economic sides are connected by political links. And that is the meaning of Imperialism. The immediate solution of the economic tangle is therefore political severance.

If we have discussed the sterling balances at some length it is because of their central significance in any scheme of national reconstruction. They form the core of what may be called its external finance. The amount of favourable balance of trade is only an auxiliary. Its possible shrinkage will depend upon the terms and the time of pay-

ment. The alternative to a prompt and full payment is the importation of foreign capital with all the new political pressure on top of the old that it connotes. To obscure these implications recourse is often had to the necessity of internal savings, deposits &c. Official propaganda has done its best in this direction, but with little success. The comparative failure of the loan and savings drives is no doubt traceable to a reaction to the means employed, but it is also largely due to economic factors the play of which the public understand in their daily life more than is thought. The savings and loans are forced in more than one sense. They are at the cost of the primary necessities of life, and life at the lowest level of subsistence at that. The percentage of savings to the national income of India has been estimated at bare 6%, i.e., half of the ratio in Germany, much less than half of Russia's and one third of Japan's. Theorists say that saving is not hoarding but investment. Quite true. But in Indian conditions, where the factors governing the propensity to consume are different in so far as consumption is mainly of food and clothing, the average expenditure covering more than 80% leaving 20% to house-rent, fuel, medical benefit and repayment of debt, saving means scrapping a surplus out of an income rendered more precarious by prices higher than what wages and dearness allowance can tackle. In India, 'saving' is a misleading term. It means cutting it to the bone, if not slicing it off. And then this question of dis-investment

crops up. Large-scale demobilisation has started, and deposits will have to be withdrawn for current expenditure. They will be spent in the purchase of non-Indian goods. So neither the method nor the nature of savings and deposits, neither the purpose nor the necessity of their release is dictated by purely economic reasons on behalf of India. They are inextricably mixed up with the political relation between India and the U. K. In the latter country, as well as in Germany and Russia, savings came *after* the requirements of the people were definitely assured by the governments. Apart from the bigger margin between the income and the expenditure of the individual consumer there, this precedence of assurance was the major ground of the successful savings drives. Here, the story of rationing and price-control is a postscript to disaster.

Have industries really grown in this war? Has expansion really taken place? Is the country charged with optimism? The answer cannot be in the affirmative. Here are the index numbers of industrial production, with 1939 as base. Iron and Steel; 122 in 1941, 116 in 1942 and 95 in 1944 (V): Textiles 113, 117 and 116: Paper 139, 116 and 107 respectively. (In Canada Iron and Steel figures alone were 273, 456 and 595). This is no jump, either absolutely or comparatively. The true position is nearer that taken by Mr. Tata and Dr. Mathai than by the apologists. They unequivocally assert that the industrial growth has been halted by the War, which means, by the

policy followed by London and Delhi during the war and before it. Lest it be held that their statement refers only to steel and iron, it is enough to remember that in 1934-44 cloth available for civil consumption was 94% of the peacetime supply, according to the Millowners, and 75% according to the Government. We can leave them to their own discrepancies and only remember that the cloth consumption per capita in the same year is 12 yards as against 15·8 in 1939. And this in spite of the fact that the Indian textile industry does produce today 14% of the cloth and 13% of the yarn in the world. Obviously, the clothing of the Army, not the Indian Units merely, export outside, and the unusable varieties are responsible for this state of affairs. It is not necessary to hold a brief for the textile interests to declare that every movement of cloth and yarn after exit from mills is entirely controlled by the government. The idea of control is not the point: it is control by a government over which the people have no control; it is the fact of the reduction of the benefit of even a small increase in production coming to the people by political exigencies. What has happened in the entire industrial field is this: the already existing industrial units have been squeezed to produce a little more with the result that the plants have suffered an abnormal rate of deterioration, the employees have been compelled to work over-time and at greater speed, and capital, thanks to the control orders, has lost its mobility.

The economic costs incurred in terms of depreciation, obsolescence, slower rate of recuperation, and truncating of the uses of capital are tremendous. They more than make up for profit. Secondly, the subsidiary industries that have grown are of a temporary nature. The diversion of production there has been anti-social in many ways. But the consequences of their dismantlement are worse. Labour, to take one factor only, is facing unemployment on an unprecedented scale. The costs of mass-unemployment must be entered against the 'benefits' of the war. Lastly, it is questionable how far the present so-called expansion is solely due to the stimulus of the government policy. It can be legitimately held that it is the result of a natural growth of the factors that had appeared before the war in spite of obstacles.

About the atmosphere of optimism, the less said the better. The Woodhead report should be enough to dispel such fond surmises. Optimism at Rs 10,000 per corpse is a pretty high price. Official corruption, black-marketing, criminal negligence, utter incompetence may be enough sources of exhilaration for a few, but for the people they make for depression and bitterness. In that mood, only one good emerges. viz., an understanding of the fundamental fact that India's economy is the artificial product of India's political subjection to the U. K., who thus finds itself in the advantageous position of blocking India's economic expansion.

It is not suggested that <sup>all</sup> all economic ills of India will disappear with the liquidation of the foreign rule. The legacy will be there for years to come. Only a government of the people by the people and for the people can work it off. That the people can do it is borne out by the experience of 1937 to 1939 when the Congress ruled over more than half the country. That they are determined to do it is completely proved by the importance the Indian National Congress attaches to the work of the National Planning Committee. Therefore, some think that first in the order of importance should come the strategy of breaking the political link that connects British economy with Indian economy until each is permitted to follow its destiny, and in that process forges new bonds of economic democracy embracing the world, which may or may not include the British empire as it is to-day.

## *China and India*

China impinges on India from all sides, down the ages, up to this last minute. Dr. Probodh Bagchi's *India and China* unfolds the story of a thousand years of Sino-Indian culture-contact; Madame Chiang broadcasts to the United States on the United Nations' Day, and at a time when China enters into the eighth year of resistance against Japan's wanton aggression, the stirring message of the right of men to think and express their opinions and beliefs, subject only to the dictates of their conscience so that in the process of reaching conclusions they will have the moral and physical courage to make decisions and take criticisms. This is a right which India does not possess but cherishes as an ideal. On the other hand, the fall of Changsa, the capital of Honan, the rice-bowl of China, and the total effort of the United Nations' not quite adequate aid are announced even though in the quieter corners of the Press. Vice-President Wallace, however, is now in Chungking and Stillwell's forces are forging ahead; Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek's *War Speeches from July 1937 to January 1944* breathes the unconquerable spirit of his great country, and Kung once more underlines it; S. S. Batliwala's *Makers of New China* and Hiren Mukerji's *China Calling* show China's secret in the strength of the people, while Chen Pai-ta's critique of *China's*



*Destiny*, the Generalissimo's famous book which has been hailed throughout the world as the outline of his vision, exposes the reactionary elements that are creeping into China's politics and tending to disrupt the popular front. Only an optimist could remain contented with the trend of recent affairs in China. The Japanese fleet has been beaten time and again, but it has not yet been annihilated: the Burma Road has been cut, but it has not yet been opened; (opened subsequently.) The stream of assistance is flowing, but it is yet a trickle; and the Kuomintang has not yet made it up with the strongest of the anti-Fascist groups. What can Mr. Wallace do in the circumstances? Mr. Oliver Lyttleton's *faux pas* and his speech on Full Employment are significant. Is it not therefore pardonable to connect these two consecutive events and conclude that even if the political crime of mandates be unrepeatable today, the economic blunder of dividing the East into so many markets for spoliation is within the realm of probability? And it is just the point where China meets India. Both China and India may easily become 'mandated' economies after the victory, unless their people look out.

Which brings us right into the heart of the Asiatic social economy. But let us first remove one mischievous idea that is going the round of publicists today, *viz.* Zonalism. South-East Asia is a zone, the Pacific is another, the Middle East is a third, and so on. The strength of the idea is derived from the geographical concept of

regions, each bounded within its limits by the prominence of a certain pattern made up of a number of strands, social, political and cultural. The economic strand is conditioned by the material conditions of the region, and the other three by its traditions. Constant interchange between these strands hardens their ensemble and makes one region stand out in its uniqueness. Dr. Radhakamal Mukerji has developed the meaning of such interchanges into one of shifting equilibria between the vegetable, the animal and the human communities. In other words, the logical conclusion of regionalism is Social Ecology. So far the concept of regionalism is valuable and as scientific as Social Economy can be made to be. But the trouble begins when a geographical notion is wedded to Politics instead of Economics. Then is the monster of Geo-politics born. And it breeds in its turn a race of mischievous gnomes, one such being Prof. Coupland's thesis of splitting up India according to river-basins in the name of political settlement between Hindus and Muslims. First, the Indian Ocean is to be commanded from India, and then the river-systems have to be 'naturally' divided, to be ruled from Whitehall. That is to say, first the zone and then the region, and subsequently, every region is to be further divided, sub-divided, until one gets at the hard core of an unsplittable nucleus no bigger than an Indian peasant's sub-infeudated holding with a marked social economy of its own! The story is not ended there. It ends where it began.

viz. the urgency of a strong foreign, political and economic power to weld the particles into one whole. Zonalism may thus become a plea for the perpetuation of old Imperialist mistakes under new scientific terms. Naturally, the zonal exploitation is not likely to be conducted in a fit of absent-mindedness; it will be done scientifically. But the problems of Asiatic social economy, for the matter of that, the problems of any economy, are not going to be solved by Zonalism, Regionalism, Geo-politics and all that. It is the dynamic process of economic and social evolution which can do that job. Geography cannot plead alibi for History.

The authentic secret of Asiatic history, the secret that binds India and China, but which does no longer bind Soviet Asia, is the fact that both Indian and Chinese societies are, by and large, (A) semi-feudal and semi-colonial. The partialness of feudalism consists in the following: (a) its dominance only in certain areas, (b) its limitation elsewhere by (i) peasant-proprietorship, (ii) communal ownership, (iii) petty commercialism. Yet feudalism remains the rule and the context. Rural economy, in short, forms the base of Indian and Chinese living. But the pyramid is equally common. On that rural-*baniya* base rises a type of capitalistic economy which is not on par with what we read about in the text-books of English History in the XIX century. China and India are *also* under (B) the commercial capitalism of single capitalists, and (C) the

capitalism of governments, by which railways and irrigation, civil and war-supplies, and similar other things are ordained and manipulated. The scope of this form of capitalism has been fast expanding not only through the agency of the central government but also of the provincial ones. It is not simply in India that supply and famine-relief have been looked upon as business propositions and that high prices have been caused by inflation and shortage of goods, occasioned by the government acting as a capitalist body, i.e. as a very strong competitor of other capitalistic concerns, and using them, in accordance with its own strength, as contractors. Commercial capitalism in both countries is seeking to be transformed into industrial capitalism, and in that process it is being hindered by (D) Imperialism, but is supported by (E) indigenous Finance-capital which at present has only the strength of a growing infant. It is obvious that the evolving native capitalism has to play the part of Janus, one face stern against Feudalism and another still sterner face against Imperialism. Native Finance-capital sometimes flirts with one enemy and sometimes with another. Imperialism therefore seeks allies with all the enemies of growing native capitalism, which in its turn searches for collaborators mainly among the nationalists. Native capitalism in both countries, therefore, functions within the ring of Imperialism and Feudalism and must needs break out with the help of Nationalism. It is not an

enviable position. But the strategy of the Chinese and the Indian revolutions aim at breaking the ring at the point where the two halves join. Against Imperialism are massed all the forces which a growing capitalism can muster—this is the bourgeois part; against Feudalism it mobilises all the democratic urges implied in (a) the transfer of land-ownership from the holder to the tenant-cultivator, and (b) the planned transformation of rural economy by industrial economy. The Chinese and the Indian revolutions are one in being 'an anti-Imperialist, anti-feudal, bourgeois-democratic, national Revolution.'

It is not possible for me to go into details about the *dynamics* of change that is sweeping over India and China. Suffice it to indicate that the authentic social impulses have come in both countries, as they could not but have come, from the peasantry, the proletariat, and the bourgeoisie, petty and large. Anti-Imperialism is not confined to the last element. People fail to notice the quivering in the farthest reaches, because they are myopic. The quiver is a shock with the bourgeoisie, and quite naturally. But more important than that shocking impact is the spread of the shake among the masses. And more real too; only the level is not intellectual. Eventually, that does not very much matter. Meanwhile, the petty bourgeoisie, including the intellectuals, are acting catalytically. Their conscious section, (and the intellectual section is

not identical with the conscious section), seems to be facilitating linkage between the democratic, the nationalist and the anti-Imperialist forces, on the one hand, and between them and the masses on the other. Not all the factors of the first group are revolutionary by nature. In fact, the 'natural' revolutionary is only an ill-trained child. Some democrats are anti-national, some nationalists are anti-capitalists, and some capitalists are the henchmen of Imperialism. At the same time, with or without volition, some democrats, some nationalists, some capitalists are a *part* of the revolution. If this analysis be true, and it seems to be objectively true in India and China, then the only common factors for the strategy mentioned above is the United Front of all the integral parts of the revolution within a country and then between the two countries. The parts which are neither of nor for the social revolution tend towards Fascism. It is an ever-present danger to be ignored at the peril of the cause. And here is the significance of Chen's pamphlet. Intellectuals being catalytics remain intellectuals, like chemical catalytics, in the end, although they undergo changes in the process of catalysis. In other words, they need not fear the ultimate loss of intellectual freedom and honesty, only if they are not afraid now of the free-ing ability of the social revolution through the agency of the anti-Imperialist, anti-Capitalist masses. There are evidences to prove the emergence of such a group possessing the above

attitude in India and China alike.

Such is the common *historical* analysis of China's and India's social forces. I have said before that their secret does no longer bind Soviet Asia. That part of Asia, *today*, is neither semi-feudal nor semi-colonial. The problems of Imperialism it need not face now. Under the Czars, Asiatic Russia was a colony. It was then a prison-house of nationalities. The present picture is given by a British expert on the colonial system, Mr. Leonard Barnes, who possesses both file and field-experience. His *Soviet Light on the Colonies* (Penguin Special.) is a very interesting comparative study of colonial policies. It corrects E. S. Bates' book, *Soviet Asia*, on several material points and should enable an un-biassed student to conclude that Sovietised Asia, an area bigger than China or India, so long more backward than either in every way, has been saved from facing the economy of the tribal stage, of feudalism, of capitalism and of Imperialism, at one and the same time. There isn't a thing like a model in history, because a country is not an artist's studio, nor is the search for parallels a gainful occupation. But there are milestones and pointers; they are not the travelling; they are useful in the counting so necessary for the traveller.

So, China impinges on India, entwines its destiny with India's, and forges a functional, revolutionary unity which is far richer than what the missionaries from Houen-Tsang and

It-Sing to Tagore and Jawaharlal achieved. All honour to them! But culture-contacts are not sufficient. Racial, geographical, and attitudinal differences may still separate. The evolution of social economy does not. We most intimately meet only when we are on the way. Ambassadors, philanthropists, pilgrims come and go, but only those who make the road can go ahead in the creative unity of comradeship. In any case, they alone should have the right of way. China is calling to India, India is calling to China.



### *Prospects for Religion*

I have often been struck by coincidences in my reading. Once, immediately after I had finished Thomas Mann's *Magic Mountain*, a number of novels and poems dealing with the hours before death tumbled into my hands. It happened again the other day. I went to my bookshop and purchased at random a few novels and books on Sociology. The former depicted the lives of certain Europeans and Americans in the remote pagan corners of the world, and the latter described the patterns of living of primitive tribes as they were being affected by foreign standards of politics, morality and religion. Thus it was that my impressions of these varied types of books were strung together by the feeling that Christainity was facing the greatest crisis of its career. And the very morning I had done with the last of these volumes, I read Lord Halifax's statement that the present war was being waged in defence of Christianity.

My purpose in mentioning this experience is not to suggest that Christianity, for the matter of that, any religion, is the direct concern of the present conflict. To interpret this crisis in civilisation as the ordeal of Christainity is running full tilt against the findings of quite a few thinkers as also against the behaviours of some of the most

powerful man ruling the destinies of Christian Europe and America. In fact, Mr. Winston Churchill's definition of war aims in terms of the survival of the British Empire is more consonant with the temper of the war. If these books are any index, Christianity has already lost its hold upon a number of creative spirits who would run to any corner of the globe for the life-giving spring rather than live amidst the welter of rocks that is Europe. The case of the Huxley group is not an unusual one; and the peculiar inwardness of the pilot-literature, which intimacies with the elements have engendered, suggests a flight from Christian sophistication into a pagan world of direct unison.

Before I proceed I must explain why I take Christianity. Lord Halifax is not the reason, but only the occasion. In the first place, Christianity is the only active religion that is institutionalised in Churches. Secondly, it is commonly associated with the civilisation of Europe, the affairs of which are very much in the picture these days. Lastly, I select Christianity because more than any other religion it has been favourable to the development of a particular system of production, which, in its turn, has created a weltanschauung inimical to the pristine purpose. Obviously, my selection is illustrative; what has happened to Christianity is likely to happen to other religions less institutionalised to withstand the action of the antithesis once the impediments to the free play of forces are consumed, as they

are now being done.

To-day, in reality, Christianity and 'European civilisation are distinct entities; and both know it. The separation is not merely the substitution of the Bible and the autonomy of the individual conscience for the authority of the Church. It is not even the undermining of faith by reason and science or the lack of interest in the affairs of the spirit caused by the outburst of material prosperity. Nationalism can partly, not fully explain this divorce; nor can it be proved that the modern clergy are less intelligent and devout than the scholastics. What we see today is more vital than a retreat of Christianity behind the facade of concordats and compromises. The Papal Encyclical recognising the fact of 'expansion' is more important than the diplomatic omission of any reference to the moral obligation of treaties and the pledge of arbitration solemnly given by the Italian government. Similarly, the Pope's advice of moderate but legitimate resistance and views on martyrdom in regard to the Spanish Catholics' attitude to the legally constituted Government's action against Churchmen and Church property is less significant as a counsel than the reality of the acceptance of Franco as the victor. In Germany, though Karl Barth had to run away and Pastor Niemöller is still in the concentration camp, we cannot forget that (1) by the Concordat of 1933, which still holds true, the condemnation by the Catholic Bishops of the Nazi movement was 'suspended';

(2) the Centre had ceased to function as a political party, the Christian Trade Unions have blessed the Nazi labour policy, and general moral support and recognition has been given by the Church to the new Government. In regard to the Protestant Church in Germany, the sullen opposition of the Reich's Bishop is not effective, and the minister of Religion is more concerned with fostering the growing cult of Oden among the German Youth. The position of the Catholic Church *vis à vis* Communism received a final definition in the March 1937 encyclical of Pius XI. The *Divini Redemptoris* was a severe condemnation of Communism, and in a language that reminds the reader by contrast of the characteristic moderation of previous encyclicals for the Spanish Catholics, the German Bishops and the Fascist Government. The D. R. no doubt urged the reconstruction of the labour movement on Christian foundations, but it made little reference to the unchristian obstacles of Capitalism. The Catholic Church shared with the English and the French state a greater hatred for Communism than for Fascism; it undid the silent movement inside the Catholic Church on behalf of the working classes; it quashed Leo XIII's *Reum Novarum* which was the last Charter of Democracy on Christian principles; and it forgot that the Marxist theory, in the language of a devout Catholic writer, Maritain, contained Christian elements, such as justice and charity, and which, (in the opinion of a liberal thinker, Leonard

Woolf, was also in the Periclean tradition of democracy. The Protestant Church, in its homeland, is usually the Conservative party in prayer. In the colonies, it subtly serves the Empire. In India the deportation of the Muttra and the Lucknow pastors is well known. Christian missionaries who identify themselves too freely with native aspirations and movements for justice are 'suspects' in the eyes of the Indian Government; and many Indians feel that Christianity has become a defence of the status quo in the colonies even at the expense of the propagation of the Bible.

Numerous such instances can be given to show the predicament to which the diarchic position of the Church has been exposed and the new code of values that has crept into Christianity. This new code has been furnished by what may be called 'Statism' a dispensation which runs across different types of Nazism and even that vast indifferent area which prides itself on its opposition to them in the name of liberal principles. The difference between the old notion of the State and this consist in the fact that whereas the former would be satisfied with passive consent, the latter would demand an active and enthusiastic allegiance to it from every individual in so far as it offers him a complete and total set of conduct. In other words, to-day, the State alone is free, and therefore, it alone exists as an end in itself. So far as I know, this is the opposite of even the minimal postulates of the

Christian ethic. The protestant Church had openly sought to instal the Bible and Grace in the individual heart as the chief means of salvation; and the Catholic Church was also finally compelled by circumstance to reduce its empire to matters of individual conscience. In either case, the value of Christianity as a whole has been reduced to a doctrine of human personality, which is certainly an important term in the dialectic of 'Liberty-Grace.' To even this partial, humanistic concept of personality is opposed the new cult of confessional state as the one and only synthesis, possessing, instead of Grace, unlimited powers to crush heresy, which is so easily confused with political intransigence.

This Statism also sums up the long-drawn process of disintegration of two other Christian postulates viz., Universality and Autonomy. Since the days of Reformation the State has been proclaiming its own autonomy in the name of natural law. Once it was conceded, the supernatural element was cut off and the way down secularism was paved. Autonomy passed on to the separation of the church from the State creating a gap that cried to be filled. And it was sought to be filled by the positive content of Liberty in accordance with the dictates of human reason with the sanction of its own laws of thought. But the intellectual polarisation created by the tension between natural law and human logic led to active opposition by the forces of democracy which went by the sovereignty

of the individual and ignored that of God. The next stages marked the rapid laicization of the State as the vindicator of the rights of private property. In this period the Church was faced with the alternative of blessing the existing order or of taking up an attitude of paternal benevolence towards the exploited. Christian thinkers had, no doubt, discovered the Christian need of standing up for workers' human rights, but their pious wishes were ineffective. At best, they reflected the changed attitude of the state as the protector, the trustee of certain unfortunate creatures like the colonials and the wage-earners. Throughout, Nationalism had also been doing its best to undermine the universality of the Christian ethic. It had also destroyed that of early Capitalism, which by its practice of international free-trade had forged new bonds of mutuality in material interests and created a notion of the values of personality, through the philosophy of individualism, to rationalise the policy of non-interference by the State. Coupled with racialism the national State has at last reached a totality and acquired a mission that submerges all Christian moral and spiritual values and offers its own in their stead. In this struggle, the Church does not possess the necessary vision of spying the real enemy, because he wears the cloak of sanctimony, and of discovering the true friend, because he does not take the name of God in vain.

What may this myopia have been due to is a

legitimate question to ask. It has been suggested that Statism developed when men who owed their notions of freedom to certain radical movements realised that the good of one individual conflicted with that another, and consequently, when the individual learnt to look up to an overwhelming organisation, a Leviathan, for the solution of the conflict. The suggestion contains an element of truth which, if developed, offers the explanation of the blind spots of the Church. It is not quite correct to assert that men came to recognise the over-riding role of the State in reaction to individualism or in sheer despair. A truer version is the thesis that Statism was implicit in individualism. The Reformation certainly gave dignity to the individual. But it also contained the seed of the Authoritarian State. Martin Luther, if left to himself, would substitute the axe for the stake, and the authority of the State, i.e. the throne, for that of the altar. "You see it is as I said, that Christians are rare people on earth. Therefore stern hard civil rule is necessary in the world, lest the world become wild, peace vanish, and commerce and common interests be destroyed ..... No one need think that the world can be ruled without blood. The civil sword shall and must be red and bloody".

The above is a quotation from Martin Luther. Hitler has only put German Aryans in the place of the Christians and seems to have left the sentence as it is in sheer despair of improving it. But the historical fact is that it took nearly three



centuries to develop the State authority that would please Luther. And the reason is that in this interval Capitalism acquired sufficient strength to destroy the foundations of Christianity completely. It did so through devious ways and doctrines, overtly and covertly, through free trade, with the help of political, economic, philosophical theories, by subsidies to Science so long as it served its purpose, till at last Christianity was compelled to preach that economic relations had standards of their own, that business was business, till indifference to Christian values became the main feature of the conduct of the Christian people. The Church refused to think out the social policy and gradually allied itself with the economic powers. By the end of the nineteenth century, the Church like the State in every industrialised country, became a departmental head in a huge business firm. After Capitalism had done the work, Statism could come to its own. In short, it is Capitalism that has killed Christianity and raised an obedient State in its stead. No wonder that Imperialism has to be palmed off as defence of Christianity, and that anti-Imperialism in its turn takes the shape of anti-Christian feeling and mixes up religion with nationalism in colonial countries.

I wonder if India could help in the restoration of the balance that had been upset by the decay of religious feeling. A. N. Whitehead had no doubt predicted the recrudescence of religion in this century and combined the names of Lord

Irwin and Mahatmaji in that connection. In India, not only is politics entangled with religion, but religion has got involved in politics. Muslims openly declare the intimacy; the Hindus mean it and practise it. Mahatmaji's non-violence is simultaneously an experiment in religion and in politics. The Indian Christians have not yet begun to play their legitimate part in moulding India's destiny and their contribution either to religion or to politics is still vague. But one thing must be said. Mahatmaji's attitude regarding the War is something more than mere pacifism. It is not a mere protest against senseless carnage in the name of conscience or economy or humanism. It is really and truly an assertion of certain universal ethical and spiritual values which we have learnt to associate with religion. So far so good. But doubts may still be entertained about his success in India on which the adoption by the rest of the world will to some extent depend. The chief difficulty will be the same as has been felt in Europe. Anybody with eyes open will have noticed that the aggressively religious section among the Hindus, I mean those who take the name of God most, who make the longest pilgrimages, endow the largest amount to religious and philanthropic institutions, who wax most eloquent over the protection of cows, and refer most to divine intervention in the day today activities, is formed by the capitalists and big business men. And, this is important, they are the greatest admirers of Mahatmaji. One would also think

that as compared to any other economic group they use Khaddar more frequently. Mahatmaji's fast concerns them first. I do not suggest anything sinister in this association. I only mean that successful Indian men in business and in professions easily become religious. If it were mere age that mellows pride, or a divine cloak to cover, bless or pardon, the ways of personal success, it would be natural. But it is something more than that, it is a historical phenomenon. The decay of interest in religion and the disinterested pursuit of profit form one cognate historical fact. The other world and this world are transferable foci; and collective attention can be diverted by changes in the means, modes and conditions of material living. In so far as such changes have come to stay in India, Mahatmaji's magnificent stand for spiritual values may come to nought. This great man's endeavour is likely to be torpedoed by history; and the saboteurs will be his own religious devotees.

With these prospects in view the only alternative for religion, be it Christianity or Hinduism, is to discard the enemies that work from within, recognise its friends, and ally itself with them, completely, to the point of effacement. Religion is a product of social processes, and as such, itself is subject to laws of history. It is a sum total of values, and values come out of living and the attempt at living better. Modes of living change, but living and the desire for better living are constant for human society. Keeping

the constant in view, the laws of history have to be applied to the discovery of the quantity and quality of change in the modes of living. Up till now, religion has been traditional and depended too much upon unchangeable codes and substances; it is high time that it should come to terms with the laws of change. Capitalism means for India a change from feudalism; but capitalism does not end the series. If it does, then good-bye to religion, spirituality and the rest of it. A few reforms here and there, the opening of a temple gate or a well, the spread of a few sects, and a general atmosphere of religiosity, are not enough. Even endowments, and relief measurers are not; they are investments. If India has developed certain spiritual values, and if these are valuable, then this rising ride of capitalism has to be closely watched; otherwise, India will mechanically repeat the history of Europe with all its conflicts between the Church and the State covering this real social conflict within. India has not had a Church; she has not had a State either. But don't we see both of them sprouting out of the mud? The crisis of religion is nothing unique; it is the old social crisis in the guise of *devas* fighting the *danava* of a modern state.\*

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\* Recent Papal encyclicals and the pronouncements of the last Archbishop of Canterbury show further adjustments of Christian thoughts to present realities.

### *Re-orientations in Christian Thought*

Some time ago I came across a series of correspondences in an important daily where a number of charges were delivered against Christianity and its positive disservices to the march of civilisation. Quotations from various authors, professedly anti-Christian, were in plenty. But it was easy for one to see that the critics were not anti-religious. For example, they would not dismiss religion as opium. Two things appeared to have been working in their mind: (1) a conviction of the innate superiority of Hinduism over Christianity, and (2) a reaction to Lord Halifax's statement that the war was for the defence of Christianity. The first was in the sub, and the second was in the fore-conscious level. But certainly Halifax is not a leader of Christian thought nor is his contribution to the conduct of the war as decisive as say that of Mr. Roosevelt, M. Stalin, Mr. Churchill or Marshal Chiang Kai Shek. Again, one cannot be very sure about the superiority of this religion or that. All that one can say is that in so far as a good bit of religion is a social product, the religion that a particular society has thrown up is 'good' for that society. If the analysis is pushed further, intelligence reels back against the blasts of emotion. My interest in the controversy is very limited. It does not go beyond certain

data of Church history, such as the feudal ownership of large estates by the Catholic Churches and the close connection between certain Protestant sects with the rise of capitalism. On the other hand, my intimate concern is with the fact that Christian thought is being considerably re-shuffled while Indian thought, Hindu and Muslim, is only being re-hashed. The re-shuffling has no doubt been at the instance of a variety of disorders, e.g., wars, unemployment and insecurity, the rise of dictatorship and the like. We have either escaped these occasions or been inured to them. Still we have our own stresses. Not a single first-rate book on Hindu philosophy is there to tell us, the average Hindu educated, the philosophical implications of this or that system of Hindu philosophy in regard to the general desire for independence or economic uplift. It will be wrong to say that such implications cannot be drawn. We did develop a type of materialist philosophy, and at least, Tantrik conceptions have a great deal to do with Power and the part of violence in the cosmic order. The spirit of Christianity in the hands of Christian states and Christian capitalists and Christian missionaries may have been destroyed, but I find that it is still intellectually alert. Can this be said of any school of Hindu or Islamic philosophy or theology? Sir M. Iqbal delivered a brilliant series of lectures on the re-construction of religious thought in Islam. Have they had any effect either upon the intellect or upon the attitude

of those for whom the lectures were primarily meant? Has any considerable Muslim politician taken up Iqbal's plea for history and for inductive reasoning? Similarly, Sri Aurobindo, at least some of his pupils have a philosophy of this war. Do we care to know it? Has any Hindu leader followed it up? But in the West, Christian thought is relevant to the grave issues of today. There, it is being repaired, here, we, are living on our talents. This difference exercises me more than what Gibbon and Buckle said about Christianity, even more than the Bible's being followed by the flag and the Bank, nay much more than one insignificant man's interpretation of the purpose of this war.

We Indians must know the reorientation in Christian thought. It is as important as knowledge of the economic history of Christian powers. It is certainly more vital than speculating upon Mr. Churchill's successor and the possibility of the abolition of Mr. L. S. Amery's post for good. From my study of works by various leaders of Christian thought, as well as of the proceedings of certain conferences and certain pronouncements by responsible men who can speak of Christianity, I have come to certain conclusions. Let me put them one by one. (1) There is a tremendous amount of self-criticism going round. It has a broad basis in the recognition of certain facts that had been long explained by the conception of original sin or ignored with supreme indifference or even justified in an esoteric way

as the will of God. After Christianity had come to terms with mechanical science, it was but the next step to acknowledge the findings of social sciences. These latter, for example, had found that poverty was neither sin nor a school of chastity but a crime against society. The problem was to connect Christ and his poverty with the undesired effects of trade-cycles that worked like blind destiny. So the first attempt was to disassociate capitalism that bred poverty from Christianity that preached love and sought poverty for love's sake. Nearly all the modern Christian thinkers are ashamed of the previous association of Capitalism with Christianity; they go further and want to socially stabilise the principle of Christian love by the weight of social justice. In this they do not even hesitate to borrow from Roman law or Soviet Communism, two highly developed secular but European systems of thought and practice. The self-criticism is not confined to economic matters. Instances are known of British missionaries who do not feel happy about the colonial and the Indian situation and advocate independence on Christian principles. Against the evil deeds of foreign missionaries in China are to be set their achievements in the sphere of education and the co-operative movement. In Africa, certain missions have been compelled to substitute their superior attitude of trusteeship by the scientific, anthropological approach. To-day, if an Indian walked with eyes open he would even detect a glance of



apology and a blush of shame in the eyes and face of many preachers of the gospel. The conscientious ones among them are critical of themselves and the part their own kinsmen are playing today.

(2) Modern Christian thought, if not averse from defensive and righteous war, is deeply concerned with the causes of the recurrence of wars. Naturally, its positive anxiety is with post-war reconstruction having a deep and generalised sense of security as its capital condition. There is an increasing realisation of the fact that spiritual security is a function of social security. An extreme advocacy is that of the Dean of Canterbury. What a distance has been traversed by official Christianity in England since the gloomy days of Dean Inge who once so forgot his priestly dignity as to call the Bolshies rascals and scoundrels! Leaving these extremes apart, there is a large section of Christian opinion that sincerely wants to remove the causes of future wars by state-assurance of social security. I shall not be surprised if a future Bishops' Conference in Great Britain adopts and blesses the Beveridge report on Social Insurance. It is a truism to assert that progressive Christian thought has condemned uncontrolled individualism with its twin drives of profit motive and the rule of money. The defect is not in Christianity, but in the incapacity for social thinking, which, I submit, is almost a universal phenomenon. The defence of economic individualism, the profit motive and the rule of

money is not a rare thing among Indian thinkers in universities, and they are usually non-religious.

(3) No Christian thinker of eminence today is blind to the limitations of sovereign states and to the dire necessity of an international order. National and racial superiority has not been claimed by any significant Christian writer that I know of. Of course, there are differences of approach in regard to the promptings of action between the humanists on the one hand and the purely Christian thinkers, i.e. the theologians, on the other. The schools of Christian thought vary between themselves. Personally, my preferences are for the Catholic school of thought. At the same time, I feel that the common grounds of Protestant and Catholic thought are becoming ampler. The probable reason is that both are being affected by humanitarian principles, that both are interested in socialising the City of God, here and now. It may be that in this contact the emphasis on individual spirituality will be less and that on the Church as the crystallisation of Christianity as a social experience will be more. If redemptive love is to inform the structure of common life as it is lived in Christian countries, it had better operate through a traditional institution. But I am not very sure. Western civilisation, which is far from dead, has its own view of spirituality derived from its other, non-Christian sources. Who knows that these latter will not enrich the former? That will be the re-birth of Christianity.

My review of modern Christian thought is certainly very inexhaustive. Being a student of sociology I have had to come in touch with progressive thinking among Christian writers. It is quite possible that modern Christian practice is lagging miles behind. But that culture lag is to be found everywhere. Then why be unfair to a great religion, particularly a religion that is being renewed. For aught one can see from the hectic rise of Indian capitalism, it will be the Indian religions that are going to gild the fetters of economic serfdom as the Christian churches once did.

### *A Word to the Indian Marxists*

The popularity of Marxist thought among the younger sections of Indian intellectuals is a marked trait by now. It deserves very serious consideration of all who are interested in the actualities of the present situation and in the evolving course of affairs. Unfortunately, Marx's own writings and Marxist literature had been so far taboo with the circle who could intellectually cope with them, and they had also been prevented from reaching those who could act on them. If the Russo-German pact had not been broken by Hitler, this spate of Marxist literature in cheap Indian editions would not have been possible. The orthodox political set do not feel happy about this consequence of Hitler's crime. On the other hand, a number of young men and women have suddenly become familiar with the main outlines of Marxism.

This suddenness of the shock may be therapeutic; it may also be fatal. Hence the need for some clear thinking. Any system that offers a clue, probably the best clue, to the happenings of these years, any thought that is not merely a theory, any challenge to the ideology that vested interests throw up in self-defence and self-perpetuation, any stimulus that evokes cerebration in the minds of those who have been deadened by this education, any forward-looking attitude

that is not cramped by the local and the temporary, cannot but be welcome in the larger interests of the country. Those who are apprehensive of the cultural dangers of Marxism for India are wrong. Its 'materialism' is not the materialism of the sensualist or of the mechanistic-scientist; its pronounced 'idealism' is better grounded upon the facts of life and the laws of living than the idealism of academies; its stress on Science is one of the best correctives to the debilitating transcendentalism of the Indian; its democracy, yes, Marxism is along some of the best democratic traditions of the Greek, the French and the British political thought, is fuller than the democracy of any of the previous forms; its civic sense is the fruit of fraternity, that plant which was going to be killed by the under-growth of theories of individual freedom; and its capacity to produce splendid men and women at once serious and self-sacrificing is on par with that of any other cause that ever set young human hearts on fire. These are not large claims at all. So when Marxism has come to India, who can be unhappy but those who want to keep India as she has been—an etherised patient stretched on this huge operating table?

One would therefore seize this juncture to discuss the character of 'Marxist thought' which is now gaining currency. Of course, the movement is new, and Marxism, in its later versions particularly, if not always in the hands of Karl Marx himself, does not distinguish between

theory and action. Its character too is not fixed; it must develop in correspondence with the changes in the situation; nor has the quantity of thinking here reached the stage where it is likely to change its own quality. At the same time, the very newness of thought imposes certain definite obligations; and the combination of theory and action does *not* bar out thinking about the theory and testing the action in the light of the Marxist logic itself. The Marxists are a self-educating, self-effacing group, and their self-criticism is well-known. This article, coming as it does from one who is a student of Marxism by his profession, even if it be of a mere student who has not yet been intellectually convinced of the complete universality and infallibility of any 'ism', should not therefore be misconstrued.

But it may be questioned, who are the Indian Marxists? The answer is not very easy, mainly because of the lack of homogeneity in the grouping. That terrible world 'deviation' does not permit any definite reply. The Communists, the Congress Socialists, the Royists, and the Tagorites of Bengal (if there be any) all are honourable Marxists to themselves, and traitors. Trotskyites, and what not, to others. A further difficulty arises on the score of the paucity of any *legal* literature, which is all that can be available to an outsider. On the other hand, there is a lot of Marxist influence on literature, in poetry, stories, and in criticism. In fact, these are the only two positive sources of our knowledge of

the thought-processes of Indian Marxists. Encompassing them all, however, is the undefined but definite Marxist atmosphere in talk, e.g. 'Gandhiji or the Congress stands for capitalism', 'Tagore is bourgeois', 'the Muslim League is a body of capitalists and landlords', a thinker who is interested in poetry, science or philosophy is an "escapist", and a student of Marxism who is not a 'whole-hogger' is 'insincere,' an 'intellectual', a mere 'theorist'. The spirit operating this verbal reaction is no doubt a worthy one. It is even traditionally Indian in its search for perfection; it is also typically 'pure' Marxist in its manifestation of the aboriginal drive of the Hegelian Absolute. But one may also say that it is not quite a symptom of the scientific attitude.

And here is the major difficulty. Marxism may or may not be an accurate science of social tendencies; its logic may be different; but certainly, it was born in some period of human history. As such, it occupies a place in the history of human thought as it does in the context of human action. That place was temporarily preceded by the growth of inductive reasoning, of observation, experimental verification, classification, and quantitative measurement. The essence of this method was first to welcome all facts, secondly to test them, and then select them for a specific purpose. Beyond that it would not dare. Marxism took over the scientific method in the collection, observation, and selection of *social* facts. That was not the end of it.

German philosophy, in the hands of Hegel, was meanwhile bringing out the significance of History; and Logic, in the same hands, was successful in eliciting the laws of change or process. The scientific attitude of the early 19th Century was thus amended by dialectics. In that process, farewell was not bidden either to Science or to History, Philosophy or Logic. Similarly in Economics. The classical economy of the English was modified, but the intellectual apparatus that Adam Smith and Ricardo had built up was not scrapped. One of Engels' contributions was to amplify dialectics beyond logic and history and discover it in Nature. In those brilliant notes which Engels left, there is nothing 'repugnant' to the collection of facts and all that is connoted by the inductive method in science. Today, in England, France, and Soviet Russia, there are a number of first-rate scientific workers who are not only Marxists but active Communists. In their laboratories they do not find Marxism and Science to be 'repugnant' to each other, but they realise that Marxism is helpful, clarifying, and on occasions, revealing, e.g. where the accepted categories prove either inadequate or tortuous. Indian scientists, so far as we are aware, have nothing to do with Marxism as a method, but Indian Marxists are, as they should be, deeply interested in scientific methodology when they are interpreting Indian history, Indian economics, and Indian politics. In the expression of that abiding and genuine interest, however, they



depart from the continuum of scientific traditions; and they do so in the name of Marxism.

Thus, for example, Indian Marxists have given us analysis of the present conditions of our literature. They differ in details, but they agree in the liberal use of terms like feudalism, bourgeois-Capitalism, the proletariat and the masses. For them, these are more than catchwords. They have special meanings, and positive ones too. But the meaning of these meanings has become chiefly *emotive*. It should also have been *historical*. Feudalism is *not* a single phenomenon with a single connotation for all time. It has had a devious course through ages. French Feudalism performed a function different from that of English Feudalism, which in its turn was distinguishable from that of the rule of Junkers in Prussia and the Boyars in Russia. In India, most of the zemindars and talukdars were created in the last century, and they can hardly be called 'feudal'. Only in some of the Indian states can a close parallel of the general European pattern be found. The landowning interests in British India are *not* manorial, nor is the continuity of their tenure, permanent or otherwise dependent upon military service. Feudal 'economy' too had certain changing features, and not all of them are present in the Indian rural economy. In the face of all these historical facts, Feudalism, instead of being a rigorously scientific term, can easily become a term of reproach. In science, terms should be neutral.

'Feudalism' can still be used as an approach towards the next stage, which is 'Capitalism'. Probably, that is what is being done by the Indian Marxists. But then, one or two points have to be settled first. If, historically, Feudalism in India is not on all fours with Feudalism elsewhere, the term may still be largely used with reference to India only if either of the two conditions be satisfied: (a) the Indian Marxists' consciousness of the situation that *as if* the Feudalism which had been displaced elsewhere by Capitalism is still very much here, or (b) the necessary information, or the requisite assurance is at hand to prove that the Indian type of Feudalism has been actually displaced or can be displaced by Indian Capitalism, as elsewhere. Now, the logic of 'As If' is neither Hegelian nor Marxist. The logic of 'myths', 'fictions', etc., though these can be explained by Dialectics, is anti-thetical to the laws of change and is also repugnant to the older ones of scientific thinking. Such logic belongs to the Unconscious, which was not discussed by the classic Marxist thinkers, so far as we know. And then, the student of Indian economic history may tell us that on the basis of the facts available a temporal gap is noticeable between the historical de-functioning of Indian feudalism and the historical functioning of Indian capitalism. All our 'modern' literature has grown in this gap. To describe it as 'feudal' in order to dismiss it with a 'bad character' shows the employer's mentality, neither the scientist's

nor the Marxist's. Which of course does not mean that Indian feudalism should not be displaced. On the contrary, it only means that the Indian Zamindari system, in not being a feudal order, can be made to fall by a shake or two.

Similarly with the 'bourgeoisie', or the 'middle class'. It is only very recently that we are having the real stuff. But are they of the same genre as the Victorian bourgeoisie? Not a single character in any well-known Bengali novel, not a single portrait done by an Indian painter, not one piece of domestic architecture has the four-square solidity of even a Mrs. Ward's character, an Academy portrait or a suburban villa, not to speak of the first rate artists' creations of the Victorian age. Pater and Oscar Wilde's Art for Art's sake might have been an escape mechanism, Marshall's economic doctrines might have been the echo of footsteps in flight, but Tagore's solicitude for the integrity of the artist or any middle-aged man's preference for classical music or Mughal painting is not a 'bourgeois' avoidance of the social reality; and this for the simple reason that the growth and functioning of the Indian bourgeoisie is only a yesterday's growth. The attitudes of the salariat, the black coated gentry, are at the back of modern Indian literature and culture. They are *not* the bourgeoisie who displaced feudalism or commerce-capital. They are only the fellow travellers of capitalism. Only very recently, industrialism has become a marked feature of the Indian economy. It is

growing at a fast pace. After the war, it is going to be the capital fact of the Indian life. In the meantime, 'mass', 'proletariat', are blanket-terms. The masses are still a congeries of peoples plus the 'crowd' and some sections of the labourers in cities; the 'proletariat' are not yet the 'mass'; the 'bourgeoisie' are still the *bhadralok*, the Babu, the upper stratum of the trader, the businessman and the commercial people, plus the professional, group and the industrialists. The new social contents, if they occur largely, are likely to change the composition of these concepts. Up till 1940, they were not changing so rapidly as to have justified the borrowing of names from countries where the social contents were different. Since 1940, the tempo has increased. Which indicates that Indian capitalism has come to stay, and Marxist terms may be more appropriate after the war than now.

Such questionings have troubled this writer, and prevented him from accepting in toto the Indian Marxists' interpretations and evaluations of modern Indian culture. Nay, they have disallowed him from throwing caution to the wind of doctrines. Probably, it would have been better if all the facts were there ready to fit in with the Marxist schema. But when the facts are wanting, any full-fledged acceptance of that schema is 'repugnant' to the scientific attitude, which is more or less the 'common law' for all those who deal with facts and ideas, men and materials.

This essay can be concluded only by appealing to the Marxists to ~~check their facts~~ about India. Those among them who have contacts have a chance of knowing the cross-sections of our living. But there is also the historical approach. Very little work has been done on that line. No continuous economic history of India has been attempted so far by an Indian. Its absence may connote the laziness of our intellectuals, but for the Marxist, a disregard of it, in the name of action, is un-Marxist, i.e. unhistorical, un-scientific and un-dialectical, from the combined points of view of thought and action. What is worse, the shock of Marxism upon the un-historically minded, and therefore, the unprepared youth, may have consequences other than therapeutic. The young Marxist may turn into a Fascist, and Marxism itself may lose its effectiveness in the maze of slogans.

## *Social Welfare—A New Angle*

Up till now, social workers and sociologists have approached the problem of social welfare from the point of view of *pathology*. Thus, poverty, crime, pauperism, prostitution and such other phenomena have been taken as *facts* of social life, much in the same way as diseases have been facts of individual living for the doctor. Even when the stress is on the preventive rather than on the curative side, e.g. in modern theories and practices of punishment, in insurance schemes against unemployment and sickness, the presumption remains the same. Unemployment, delinquency etc. are *treated* best by forestalling their recurrence. Much good has ensued from this approach in the way of relief and theory. Distress has been mitigated, public conscience has been aroused, functions of the state have been enlarged, democracy charged with fresh meanings, responsibility and administration humanised. Sociology too has developed by quantitative handling of vital statistics, figures of the incidence of unemployment, trade and suicide-curves, and so on. An expert class in social work has also appeared. The recognition of Sir William Beveridge by the Churchill Cabinet is no doubt very significant in as much as it has occurred in a country which has a congenital mistrust of knowledge and planning, where Sociology is still

looked down upon, and which still shows a figure of about 70,000 unemployed in the greatest all-out effort in its history. It is the same gentleman, however, who pointed out in his classic treatise that there was an *irreducible* minimum of the unemployed round about 4 per cent of the employed implicit in the industrial system, suggesting thereby that only the percentage above that was susceptible of *treatment*. My contention is that the leading sociologists of 1942 are still social pathologists. I mean the British sociologists. American Sociology suffers from the double handicap of being American and being Sociology. Marxist sociology is worse off—it is disreputable; it must not exist; therefore, it cannot and does not exist.

But do these nineteenth century presuppositions hold to-day? Is it still necessary to believe that instances of social disorganisation are similar to diseases in the matter of prognosis, diagnosis and treatment, now that new conceptions of social wealth have been actually put into practice in at least one country? Need the departure from the norm be the only solid ground from which to judge the norm, now that the content of the norm has been revealed to be a faith in and a defence of the existing order and vested interest? We know how the reigning belief of Victorian England worked its way from behind Westermarck's researches into the history of marriage and committed him to the theory of instinctive monogamy, while novel conditions of

modern living are playing havoc with that so-called biological trait. Similarly, we have seen that common endeavour is as good a substitute as, if not a better one than, the incentive of private possession. Actual Soviet figures of production (1942, August) are 5% higher than the schedule while similar figures for the U.S.A. are at least 5% less than their own ideal for the period. Surely, the sociologist and the social worker can no longer remain blind to the need for change in their attitude. They must now proceed from social health to social disease, from adjustment to maladjustment, and not vice versa.

It is difficult, no doubt. The abnormal is concrete and measurable; pain is more easily remembered than pleasure. On the other hand, the normal is vague; it is often confused with the average or the ideal as it suits the interpreter. Actuaries can calculate expectation of sickness and death, statisticians the grades of living, but once you talk of expectation of living and the standard of comfort you are lost. That is to say, you become unscientific and un-practical. So, in the name of science and of practicability, the sociologist and the social worker must remain wedded to pathology and define social health as the absence of social disease. And yet, in every branch of science, there is a norm that acts as the 'constructive' test of approximation and 'the working hypothesis' for further explanation and experiment. There is nothing wrong therefore in science as such. What is wrong is in the half-



hearted application of the scientific method to social affairs. Of all the social sciences, Economics is the most developed. Here the concept of normal value has yielded place to the optimum in spite of the fact that there are many optima and that no optimum has its exact correspondence in facts and figures. I do not mean that 'optimum' is enough, but when it does mean the highest average income per capita in the given situation, as Carr-Saunders and Robbins would have it, or the highest average expectation of life, as in Dr. Radhakamal Mukerji's analysis, it certainly registers an improvement in terms of welfare from the cult of the normal value of Marshall or of the margin of the Austrian School. Unfortunately, no such 'construct' has been firmly installed in the heart of the Science of Society, no such concept drives the social worker in his field of action. If it did, we would talk less about beggary and criminality and more about standard of comfort and civic sense. And in this, the social worker would also not be chasing the will 'the wisp. For aught one knows, a deep absorption with the optimum is realism of highest order. Those who would not like to accept that statement may be referred to the actual working of any economic planning in which there is a persistent urge towards the *full employment* of the different factors involved with due deference to the quantity and quality of each in regard to the other and at any given stage. No capitalist worth his name can disre-

gard the optimal managerial or the financial unit to secure the maximal result. In social work, the profit motive has no place, but efficiency can never be ruled out. For efficiency, we must have the construct of the optimum in place of the abnormal or the pathological. Probably, mechanistic notions of science will creep in, but then we will have to answer one way or the other the leading question, are we interested in the trappings of science or in the core of reality?

Once we acknowledge the importance of the optimum in social thought and practice, the entire problem of relief assumes a different shape. In fact, it ceases to be a burden by becoming a civic adventure. A crucial case may be discussed to illustrate my point of view. To-day, the problem of food is acute in India. The capital fact is that a large majority of people are getting neither the quantity nor the quality of edibles they have been used to, which was not much. Very interesting are the ways in which this situation is looked at. While one way is to prove that there is no actual serious shortage in the production of any staple commodity but only what arises from the dislocation of distribution by transport difficulties, by cursed hoarding and speculation, and by inter-provincial misunderstanding, another way is to recognise the shortage in terms of prices, monetary policy, export-programmes, military situation, actual quantity, and what not. The balance of emphasis is on the

second, otherwise the Grow More Food campaign is meaningless. Even if we choose to accept this campaign as honest we find that the idea of growth in the phrase 'Grow More Food' is both limited and vague. Limited it is, because the theory is that if the country could somehow address itself to such a large scale production that would push prices grovelling on the floor the Government would have no responsibility beyond purchasing a certain quantity fixed by itself at a minimum price settled similarly, and all will be well with India. On the other hand, because the level of production in India is what it is, no such contingency is likely to arise. That is to say, the Grow More Food campaign starts on the assumption that India *cannot produce* plenty of food on any but a very *low* standard of *consumption*. India's low standard of production, and also of consumption, is the sacrosanct hypothesis. It is the normal. But one would think that such a low standard in the twentieth century was really an abnormal state of affairs. Thus arises the vagueness haunting all administrative efforts. Nobody knows as yet how much of which stuff has to be produced by which region.

If, on the other hand, the Governments proceeded on the optimal requirements, the confusion would have yielded place to clear thinking and the half-hearted attempts to genuine enthusiasm. Optimum is of course a moving series. But where starvation, underfeeding and bad feeding are the order of the day, a workable

optimum may be prepared to serve for some time to come. And we can construct such an optimum on the basis of middleclass consumption amended by either of the two standards of nutrition set by the Conoor Institute and the Indian Medical Council. Researches in industrial fatigue and allied subjects are not conducted in India to an extent that can enable us to formulate a standard of food for industrial workers. But middle-class consumption figures should do. The difficulties of definition are minor ones. Those of substitution of food habits are greater, but they are not insuperable, provided that we prepare tentative statistics of comparative agricultural productivity, which, incidentally, would define the region in a more satisfactory way for our purpose than what mere physical geography could do. The practicability of a Grow More Food campaign depends upon the strength with which the idea of the optimum is held. That presupposes a revolution in concepts and attitudes, a condition which economists, social workers, and administrators nursed in ancient codes and habits find it hard to fulfil.

Other instances can be supplied to prove that the pathological has been a wrong approach to social problems. Here is dearness-allowance with so much for a rising point. With the monetary policy of the Government, there cannot be any limit to the rise of the index figures. The labourers and the capitalists have been caught in the vicious spiral, whatever may be said in defence

of the present policy. The new angle suggests a rise in wages in relation to the optimal requirements of the labour, and *not doles and allowances*. Problems will no doubt arise, but then what is the Government for if it does not ease the difficulties of industries?

All this inevitably leads to socialist planning with State ownership as the first step. Modern economists are aware of the intimate relation between rationalisation and vertical integration, on the one hand, and the search for the optimum, on the other. But socialist rationalisation is not an extended Taylorism, nor is integration identical with the private monopolistic combination we know of in the U.S.A. Socialist thought and practice proceed on the basis of the social optimum. That is the angle recommended.

## *Business as a System of Power*

The development of Business as a system of Power is one of the most significant phenomena in the history of modern Capitalism. Economists and legislators have noted with alarm the growth of monopolies, trusts and cartels; and a number of socialist thinkers have shown their hold over governments and public corporations. After the publication of Lenin's *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, in the spring of 1916, the meaning of the term Imperialism has been widely understood in the context of the pattern woven by International Monopoly and High Finance. The same treatise has been responsible for the general notion that war is a violent resolution of the conflicts inherent in Capitalism and sharpened in Imperialism. In his classic edition M. Verga has sought to bring Lenin's theses up-to-date; and he has been helped by a number of non-Marxist scholars, authors and Committeemen who, in the course of their independent studies, have followed up the ramifications of the power exercised by monopolies over the day to day administration. But, their works are less known to the public than of those who either offer a political interpretation of the world-conflict or otherwise mislead the young, who alone count in war and peace, by spuriously learned talks about the

managerial revolution as an alternative to the socialist revolution. Speaking about India, for one informed man who knows Burnham's *Managerial Revolution* and Prof. Lionel Robbins' *The Economic Causes of War*, there are a hundred who have not come across A. A. Berle & G. C. Means' *The Modern Corporation and Private Property* (1932), T. W. Arnold's *Folklore of Capitalism* (1937) and *Bottlenecks of Business* (1940), Brady's *The Spirit and Structure of German Fascism* (1937), F. Neumann's *Behemoth* (1942) or N. E. H. Davenport's *Vested Interests or Common Pool?* (1942) None of these authors are Marxists or Communists. If it were merely a matter of ignorance, much of it could be excused. Many such books, and other valuable pamphlets, were not coming during the war. But one can say confidently that some of them did reach India, though few would touch them even when they were apprised of them. From 1939 Indian intellectuals developed a very interesting aversion to propaganda and would dismiss tomes of painstaking research as British-American bluff. But the great regard for 'truth' concealed inertia and prejudice. It was difficult to think beyond Marshall and Pigou; it was so easy to rationalise prejudices against change. Now that the war is over, the excuses should disappear. But the new resistance of anti-communism is doing the old duties, until one can define an Indian intellectual's nationalism as a broad march of emotions from

prejudice to prejudice.

Certain unmistakable tendencies are appearing on the Indian horizon. The structure of Indian capitalism is tending to become monolithic. Big groups are being formed of industrial interests. Finance-capital is no stranger to the India of 1946. The war has precipitated the conversion of feudalism into capitalism, of commercial capitalism into the industrial type, and of industrial capitalism into the next higher one. Certain deals have been made between Indian and British groups of interests, and some of the delegates of the Indian states to the U. K. and the U.S.A. are openly advocating similar agreements. Partnership on a 30% basis is the 'talk of the town'. All these groups and states are very Indian and very patriotic. The extent of their control over public opinion is increasing fast. Certain developments in Indian banking, such as the fusion of banking business with industrial groups, do not augur well. What is equally important is the fact that some key-positions in the Central and Provincial Governments have been held by men connected with powerful business concerns. For aught we know, the planning departments of the various popular governments will be manned by people of the same complexion in the name of experience and in the interests of efficiency and incorruptibility. If protection be the rule, then more likely than not will these interests flourish in the shade of tariff-walls. These are some of the possibilities. One may get six or seven



milleniums behind Marx and Lenin for the warning. The Egyptian Book of the Dead has a passage which runs thus : "The soul of Amenhotep is higher than Orion, and it is united with the underworld". The passage to that underworld is not yet charted for Indians, but Amenhotep is well on the way to rule all this earth, and heaven too.

We do not fully know how Indian economics is affecting Indian politics; the data are not there. But instinct, when it is not the woman's, may sense true where facts are not sure. In any case, there is a striking uniformity of the manner in which challenges to the capitalistic world have been met by organised business in Germany, America, Japan, France and Great Britain. The solutions have been astonishingly parallel, similar, almost equivalent. And if India does not tear itself from the world, and the laws of inference do not abdicate, Indian capitalism will forge like methods to resolve like predicaments. This is the capital lesson of a remarkable book that has just arrived in the Indian market. It is Dr. Robert Brady's *Business as a System of Power*. It has all the qualities of appeal to the Indian intellectual; millions of facts, thousands of references, absence of reference to India, a bad style, and a pompous manner. It has one defect only—it is a fundamental work done in a realistic manner, and so notes on it cannot be dictated to the bright young lads taking their final degrees and com-

petitive examinations. Probably, it will not cut ice with those who quote Koestler, Hayek and Burnham as master-intellects of the day. It is a very serious, even a ponderous book, more valuable than the entire corpus of anti-socialist literature that is flooding the market and passing muster as great contributions to the history of social thought.

A bare summary of this book will do it injustice. Its concern is not with industrial monopolies, i.e. trusts and cartels, but with the huge business organisations, Trade and Manufacturers' Associations, Chambers of Commerce and their "Spitzenverbände" or 'peak associations'. They differ in details, but they are one in their great influence over their own governments and others.' They regulate production and foreign policy. Their branches inter-weave and spread out. Dominated by a few groups of men representing the giant concerns, they have formed a highly centralised system of control. Mr. Burnham's 'managers' are simply their underlings. They organise 'Public Relations' and cultivate political groups and other valuable social contacts. But the most mischievous form of their influence is in the sphere of 'outlook'. Under their slow, steady and subtle pressure, the entire intellectual atmosphere is changed. Those of us who have noticed the utter demoralisation of Indian intellectuals in recent years cannot but be nervous about the intellectual future of our country if and when capitalism gets on the saddle of Indian

nationalism and rides it to death. The distinction of State-capitalism and State-socialism will then not be easy to maintain. Dr. Brady has revealed in his own heavy manner how these 'peak associations' shape the economic, the political and the social policies of the world to-day. As noted before, the shapings run to type. But the story of the insidious modification of outlook may be more interesting. Here are a few points Dr. Brady makes to expose the process of that modification.

1. Control over popular organisations. "The company Union is father to the idea of universal, comprehensive, all-inclusive business-controlled joint labour-employer membership federations... The idea is everywhere and in all countries the same: mass organisations center around the ideologies of the upper business and social hierarchies and controlled by the self-appointed and self-perpetuating "natural" leaders from those ranks". Sir Malcolm Hailey used to call the landlords of the Punjab and the U.P. "natural leaders". That was the old feudal designation. Modern capitalism was described by the Economist (!) as New Feudalism. Our great men call the young graduates "natural leaders". And so do the capitalist-employers call the foremen or the strike-breakers. This phrase, "natural leadership" is very misleading indeed. It flatters, and controls.

2. "The militarization of employer-employee relations; by a re-assertion of authority in the

hands of the employer similar to that which obtains in the army." Note the illegalisation of strikes under the Ordinances and the quasi-judicial orders and rules of factories governing the fate of employees in India. The spirit of regimentation is abroad here. It is still negative in the cry of 'one party, one leader and one organisation', but it is near-positive in the general desire for political purges and pogroms. It is very clear in the academic world where the teacher would behave like a martinet, if only he dared. The talk about the loss of discipline that one hears so much from the lips of our leaders started in schools and colleges the staff-rooms of which had rung, rang and continue to ring with it. Recent breaches of law and order have been described as an aftermath of the war. Partly true; but more truly true is the love of regimentation which the war shaleft as a legacy to us all. The equation is simple: on the one hand, employers, who are the 'natural leaders' = teachers, who are the natural "gurus" = political leaders, who have more claims to be leaders than what mere nature can provide but who remain as "natural leaders," *versus* the employees = the student = the follower, or the "naturally" led, on the other. We are deeply indebted to the war for bringing 'discipline' into our ranks with the help of 'nature'.

3. "The evolution of a "harmony-of-all-interests" propaganda in which the employer appears as benevolent pater familias. The employer as 'patron' or 'trustee' becomes the beau-ideal of the business world. Correlatively, the

trustee concept still is applied in all other relationships of real or potential conflict between organised business and the general public. The paralleled to "industrial relations" is "public relations" .. "Public relations" advances the concept of a natural "harmony" of interest between business and the public, business and the consumer, business and social and economic progress. The relationship is that of "trustee of the people's property and welfare". In so far as the word "trusteeship" has been made familiar to us by no less a person than Mahatmaji, more or less in the same context, it is likely to remain hidden in an aura for some time to come. The danger is not in the letter, but in the use that may be made thereof. Bismarck had invoked it when he wanted to crush the Social Democrats and sabotage their policy by Social Insurance Schemes (1881 and 1892); Lord Mond started Mondism after the notorious Act of 1927 which undid fifty years of British Labour's work; De Mun and Du Pin of the French Social Catholic movement raised the slogan of "harmony of interests" between Capital and Labour; Dolfuss and Schuschnigg in Austria, Franco in Spain, the New Dealers in the U.S.A., Hitler in his Labour Front, the National Harmonising Movement of Japan did exactly the same thing; and all the Labour Welfare economists are doing it learnedly in every university in the civilised world. Mahatmaji charges the word "trusteeship" with deep meaning, but the significance which History has

given to it may be preferred instead by those who would take his name and insult his spirit. This Invisible Hand that guides all towards "a harmony of interests" need not always be the hand of God. After all, conflict is also a form of social relationship.

4. The fourth point is what Dr. Brady calls the "educational emphasis". The days of education as a liberalising and uplifting force are gone beyond recall. Poorly paid, heavily worked and ill-equipped teachers, liberal politicians, and a few simple individuals may still harp on the merits of schools, colleges, universities, research organisation, and so on, but they know, and if they do not, they should, that the 'emphasis,' which is more important than the mere purveyance of information, is in some other hands. The Press, the cinema and the radio determine the 'general knowledge' and the 'outlook'. These agencies of social control, except in rare cases, belong to groups of business organisation, in Europe, America, and minus the radio, also in India. Their control is exercised in two ways: (a) neutralisation of the hostile and the *nouveaux puissant*. It involves, to quote Dr. Brady, "recognition, wherever the Realpolitik of strategy may determine, of trade unions and similar organisations: (in India, student associations, leftist political parties, etc.); emphasis upon "cooperation" by promotion of labour-employer community activities (vide Cawnpore and Bombay): regional decentralisation of plants; legal restraints upon the "abuse" of labour power;

(e.g. the restrictions on the political fund of trade-unions); use of police power (Gwalior), strike breakers, espionage at need; the mobilization of the middle and the professional classes into patriotic and other federations; (vide the University bodies); attacks on opposition leadership under the guise of attacking "racketeering," encouragement of fear of "aliens", "fifth columnists", and other menaces which encourage in turn emphasis upon group loyalties, patriotic sentiments; and especial types of interest programs and propaganda for women, children and the aged. etc." Indian examples are too many. In the field of education proper, social control proceeds by indoctrination. Text-books are purged and rewritten; vocational bias is given to the entire system of instruction by which society is sought to be stratified according to occupations, each of which acquires a status with its own intelligence quotient. One hidden fact of indoctrination is revealed when the appeal to high motives is made. Economic motives are sordid: Man does not live by bread alone; economic interpretation is materialistic, etc; and therefore, patriotic sacrifice, spirituality, group-loyalties alone can complete a man and elicit the best in him. On analysis such arguments appear to be directed towards the irrationality of human behaviour for the purpose of regimenting it and sterilising the urges to change.

5. "The key to this type of control is political. Social control is control of political power, which

is achieved, generally, by the concentration of executive authority and policy-forming groups in the same ranks cooptatively renewed." In particular, it is done by a consolidation of an interest-conscious bloc ; and by "a popular following, the key to which is alliance with any faction, movement or party which has or may acquire popular following without disturbing the general social structure of command and subordination."

We have closely followed Dr. Brady's analysis because of its Indian relevance. Business is not yet a *system* of power in India ; but it is *power*. It can buy up opposition; it can even 'tolerate' it, and thereby sterilise it ; and it can crush it. Not quite a happy state of affairs for those who fondly persist in thinking that there may still be something in democracy which an independent India can do worse than cherish. Anyhow, vigilance remains a duty to be performed by intellectuals, if there be any in India. Dr. Brady's volume is an important publication, and everybody who can spend a few dollars should read it. The fact that the study was made possible in part by funds granted by the Carnegie Corporation heightens its value.



## *India and Russia*

Some time ago, an article appeared in the Times Literary Supplement in which the cultural links between England and Russia were learnedly described. Even though the context gave a chance to the wit, the grandeur of the sentiment (and the style) made ample amends for the opportunism of its demonstration. Those who have studied in Coates' documented volume the governing political attitude of Great Britain towards Russia after 1917 and known the part played by that august organ, among others, in giving it an intellectual expression will be amused by that article and will recover their mental balance only by a reference to the theory of mutation. Great Britain, however, is a free country still, and she can well afford to maintain and display contradictions without resolution.

India's case is on a difficult level altogether. To try to establish any link between India and Russia can only be a *tour de force*. There was a Russian East Indian Company at the end of the 16th century; a Russian eccentric started the Bengali stage in the beginning of the nineteenth; a Russian painter drew some marvellous pictures of India's pageantry by the middle of the same ; and at its end Mrs. Naidu's uncle became a professor at a Russian University, where he confused Tagore with a medieval Vaishnava poet. On the other side, a few Russian scholars had been interested

in Sanskrit literature, Buddhist philosophy, and Indian archaeology, and a famous composer thought that he had caught the spirit of the Hindu melody. That is much about all on record. The influence of India on the Russian ikons and tapestry is just good enough to promote our vanity. Whatever culture-contacts took place in early times happened outside India's frontiers, in Turkestan and in the steppes of Central Asia.

This does not mean that Russia has not played any part in the history of India. I venture the thesis that its importance to us has been overwhelming since Byron died at Missolonghi. Through the Bosphorous and the Black Sea, the Crimea and Persia, Afghanistan and the Khyber, Russia had been seeping into the foundations of Indian administration. Great Britain had sought to choke it off by the siege of Sebastopol, the battles of Balaclava and Inkermann, the provisions of the Treaty of Paris, which gave a fresh lease of life to the Sick Man of the East, by the Balkan and the Middle East policy, and a couple of Afghan wars, by a particular type of Indian army organisation, by the Indian railway system, the frontier expeditions, the Indian public debt, the Meerut Trial, and the Indian Defence Ordinances down to 1942. To put it plainly, the entire Indian administration is not based on one suspicion, *viz.*, that of the Indian people, as some assert; it is grounded on two, of which the second is the distrust of Russia. At least it was, until Hitler attacked Russia and put both Great Britain and India into a false

position regarding that strange country. And who can deny that Indian administration has governed modern Indian culture, both positively and negatively?

Here again, Britain's freedom has enabled her not to feel awkward at Cripps and his friends' homilies nor at the mild rebukes of the Soviet Trade Union delegation to England. But there is a culture-lag between Britain and India that explains the consistent attitude of the Indian administration towards people who are called Communists or the Friends of the Soviet. The fact that they are being arrested even while the Russian youth is dying for the common cause to which the British Empire, including official India, has officially subscribed, and the additional fact that the most genuine anti-Fascist elements in the country are still rotting in jails when Cripps is negotiating with India and appealing to the Indian youth to take up arms on behalf of humanity and telling them about the marvellous exploits of Russian men and women in defence of their country in an all-out effort, these and similar facts should prove my thesis once for all. If Great Britain has ceased to dislike Russia more than she dislikes Hitler's Germany, the Indian administration is still burdened with that ancient double heritage. And that administration has affected Indian life in all its ramifications. There is a lot of suspicion of Russia in all circles in India, excepting the immature youth who have no stakes in the country but their parents'. This is no mean

achievement of the Indian administration. It has made us all akin, like a touch of nature. It has thrown nationalists of unquestioned patriotism and intellectuals of high calibre into the arms of British Tories to obscenely enjoy a common hatred of Russia and Communism.

Some time ago, certain leaders of opinion were attempting a cultural connection. Tagore had published his letters from Russia, and Jawaharlal expressed his great regard for the Soviet experiment. Both called it progressive. They found a strange ally in the late Langford James whose very able prosecution of the Communists at Meerut did a lot, by reaction, on behalf of the Soviet. And then, some of our unemployed youth found out the defects of terroism and the way to the Promised Land. Persecution, even by national governments, had its share. Oxford did the rest. If Karl Marx and Lenin came in late, it was partly because their writings imposed a strain upon our intellect and partly because their publishers were Messrs. Lawrence and Wishart, a company not in the good books of the Government of India. Probably the objective conditions were also propitious. But that's another story.

Perhaps I have missed the Indian Communist Party in my account. I am told that there is one and that it is responsible for strikes in factories and colleges and schools. Granting their existence, I have my doubts about their contribution towards making the Soviet popular in India. The Patna resolution, which is alleged to have been drafted

by the Communists, has only created an anti-Soviet feeling among a large section of the student community. I have begun to hear of the purges by Stalin and the various inequalities and iniquities of his regime from young lips, even painted ones at that. The Congress Socialists, the Trotskyites, the Royists and the Simon-pure Communists are of course doing their best to demonstrate that the Indian Communist Party is only an agent of the British Communist Party, which in of course is an Imperialist clique in protective disguise, and also that Stalin is *not* waging a people's war. We have been told that Russian literature is all propaganda, that the Soviet form of government can have no appeal to the Indian, that it has falsified Marx and Lenin, and what not. In the face of these stern facts and honest attempts I cannot be foolhardy. Besides, I am of the opinion that the tender Indian intellectual with his well-known commitments cannot bear the tough responsibility of the Soviet civilisation. The labourers and peasants in India can have no obvious connection with the big issue of Indo-Russian culture. They are not leaders of fashions, and the led can have, should have, no opinions.

Therefore, I fall back upon individual cases. I take my own example. It may not be typical, but it will serve the purpose. My contact with Russia was through literature. It started in the year 1910 within a bookshop. I had matriculated, and I was in search of culture. Dickens, Thackeray,

Shelley, Keats, Byron and Tennyson, had greatly excited my literary curiosity. But I had an otherwise liberal father who believed that knowledge could also be found in countries outside England. The bookseller, probably the first educated man of his profession (since then murdered for publishing a book in which a picture of the Prophet appeared) handed me a copy of the *Virgin Soil* by Turgenieff, and Tolstoy's *Resurrection*. Very soon I became an addict to Russian novels. There was hardly any Russian author whom I did not read in English during 1910 and 1911. (Only Goncharov I could not get.) Our group did likewise. A couple of them still like Russian novels, but their taste is White Russian to-day. They are high up in the Civil Service.

We found in Russian novels a number of things which were not in the English novels. They had depth as also a new dimension. The depth was of suffering, and the dimension of the dispossessed. The suffering was so intense that it burned the bush into cinders, and its scale included the lord and the serf, man and woman, the young and the old, the normal and the abnormal. Emotions, on the one hand, were exclusively personal, and on the other, far-flung over realms of the sacred and the profane. In their supreme gift of sacrifice the Russian characters were feminine, just as in their complete abandonment to the cause they were all a race of martyrs. At once simple and complex, kind and cruel, idealistic and realistic, they had

an exaggerated fullness and rondure which invested them with a life that was denied to the caricatured creatures of Dickens, and fixed them in the solid region beyond local space and time which Thackeray's reportage could not secure for his fleeting shadows on the stage. The heroes and heroines were so decidedly human in their strength and weakness, in their combination of earth and heaven, in their hopes and fears, in their love and hatred. They were ambivalent creatures, exactly as we were. Besides, they talked and talked over their samovar about their country and their soul, doing nothing but pouring their hearts out in a cataract of confused conversation. We did likewise. Their disease was Hamletism, as ours was; their context was rural as ours was; their dreams were of freedom, personal and national, as ours reputedly were. We equated the 'mir' with the village-community, the Czarist regime with the British administration, the policeman's 'lathi' with the Cossack's lout, the peoples' superstition, illiteracy, poverty, capacity for suffering with our peoples'. They had a Frenchified or a Germanised class on the top; we had the Anglicised barristers with tender feelings towards their motherland. Above all, Russia bordered on God; we were also tied to Him by every thread of our spirituality; therefore, we were similar. So our group admired Russian novels and set the subsequent fashion. We did not notice the earlier inconsistency of an anti-Russian feeling in the Russo Japanese war.

We then passed via Prince Kropotkin's Scientific Anarchism and Mutual Aid to his Fields, Factories and Workshop. The last dose could not be swallowed. If any one was great it was that man. He led us on to Bakunin, until Lenin and Trotsky cured us of that adolescent disorder. Stories of Russian nihilism were the main food of the secret societies of Bengal. The Russian Revolution came to us through that great band of American journalists who had the uncanny gift of foresight and the unpleasant habit of forestalling British statesmen. "Ten days that shook the World," and Miss Thompson's despatches reached us secretly and opened our eyes. French and English writers followed suit. Our attitude however was fixed by Wells and Bertrand Russell, the two foci of the Indian intellectual. The Russian experiment was great, but it was not worth the suffering involved. It was about 1924 that we became acquainted with Bukharin, Trotsky, Plekhanov, and lastly Lenin. Gorki had kept up our literary relation.

Since then, we have tried to appreciate Russian music and discover affinities in its melodic structure, its drones and departures from the harmonic scale, to the Indian musical spirit. We have seen some snatches of Russian films and noticed their primary pre-occupations with the life of the masses, their rejection of stars and acceptance of the common man and woman, their vision and imagination. We have even gone into ecstasy over their functional



architecture, their new painting, photography, housing schemes and decorations. Some of us have been interested also in their economic conditions, their planned schemes, collectivisation, their socialised medicines, easy marriages, creches and cultural autonomy for the minorities.

The result is that all the work of the British administration in India has had some chance of being undone. By the side of suspicion, admiration has been growing. It would have grown much faster if only the Indian Stalinists had not caused the unfortunate split on the issue of this war and thus divided the not unlimited enthusiasm of our nationalist youth. But I am not in despair. Suspicion will survive the holocaust at Kharkov, and Stalingrad. It will increase with the entrenchment of Indian interests midwifed by this war. It will be fostered by the anti-British feeling and the pro-Fascist sympathies generated thereby. As I have said before, it is a question of more or less. Indian interests hate the British interests, but they hate the Russian bogey more. May India continue to march towards democracy based on property and profit! May she ever remain spiritual! If the Russian bordered on God we are God's own children. Being superior we cannot but be different. Therefore, Indo-Russia culture-contacts are a threat, but they are not yet a psychological probability. At best, they will be suffered to remain one of the many saddles of Pandit Jawahar Lal's hobby-horse, if and when he becomes free India's first Foreign Minister.

And yet, there may be others in India besides the well-intentioned intellectuals with their sympathetic understanding of parallel themes of history and the effective pressure-groups scenting danger to their order form a distance. India is thickly populated with the poor and the dispossessed living a life no better than that of serfs and moujiks. They may take a hand some day in the new business of re-constructing India's material base. The Russian experiment will have a bearing then, and on that process. Much will depend upon the means adopted, the means being conditioned mainly by the resistances of the privileged, the strength of traditions and the hold of alternative values which the elite may have created in the meantime. If the resistances be weak—which is not likely—the cultural links between India and Russia will be strong.

The fact of the matter is this: Whatever else culture may be, it does not run along lines laid by sentiment, otherwise India would have welcomed the Jews or supported their home-coming to Palestine. Nor does culture exactly correspond to norms, ideals and constructs, otherwise India could have been a Rama Rajya, or a socialist republic by now. Culture-diffusion or culture contact is determined by pressure-groups in the light of their interests, chiefly material. There are at least two major pressure-groups in most countries. India has one today, and that one cannot but be anti-socialist. The second is beyond the corner, just beneath the surface we tread. These two will

some day meet in combat; and out of that combat the positive attitude towards Russia will emerge. Russia is not a model, nor is India so denuded of life that its people can do nothing but copy. That is too static a view of the thing. Indo-Russian culture-contacts, like Indo-Chinese culture-contacts cannot be established by talking about them or by missions and embassies. They grow on the basis of certain principles of social dynamics.

